DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 286 790 SO 018 342

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|---|---|
| AUTHOR | Howlett, Charles F., Ed.; And Others |
| TITLE | Amityville: An Overview. |
| INSTITUTION | Amityville Memorial High School, NY. |
| PUB DATE | May 87 |
| NOTE | 116p.; Presented by the 1986-87 advanced placement U.S. history class, Amityville High School, Amityville, NY. Some photographs may not reproduce clearly. |
| PUB TYPE | Guides - Classroom Use - Materials (For Learner) (051) -- Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Historical Materials (060) |
| JOURNAL CIT | Journal of Historical Inquiry; v7 1987 |
| EDRS PRICE | MF01/PC05 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | Advanced Placement Programs; *Community Study; *Family History; High Schools; History Instruction; Learning Activities; Learning Strategies; *Local History; Oral History; *Primary Sources; Social Studies; Student Developed Materials; Student Publications; Student Research; *United States History |
| IDENTIFIERS | *New York (Amityville) |

ABSTRACT

Secondary level student historians used oral history interviews, local records, newspapers, and personal events to depict the story of their town, Amityville, New York. Students chose their own topics, researched available materials, and wrote the papers. Many of the articles are enhanced with interesting local photography. An illuminating picture of the founding families is presented through personal interviews and study of local records and materials. Papers on government, the fire and police departments, the school system and its athletic program, and the village library offer historical insights and observations. Architectural development and change was chronicled through papers dealing with the Grand Old Hotels, the seven sites designated as historical landmarks, and the changes in homes from early American to bungalow styles. Local transportation was surveyed in papers on the railroad and the streets. The contributions of the Dominican Sisters of Queen of the Rosary of Amityville were recognized through an investigation of the origins of the order. (SM)

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# JOURNAL of HISTORICAL INQUIRY

## Vol. VII

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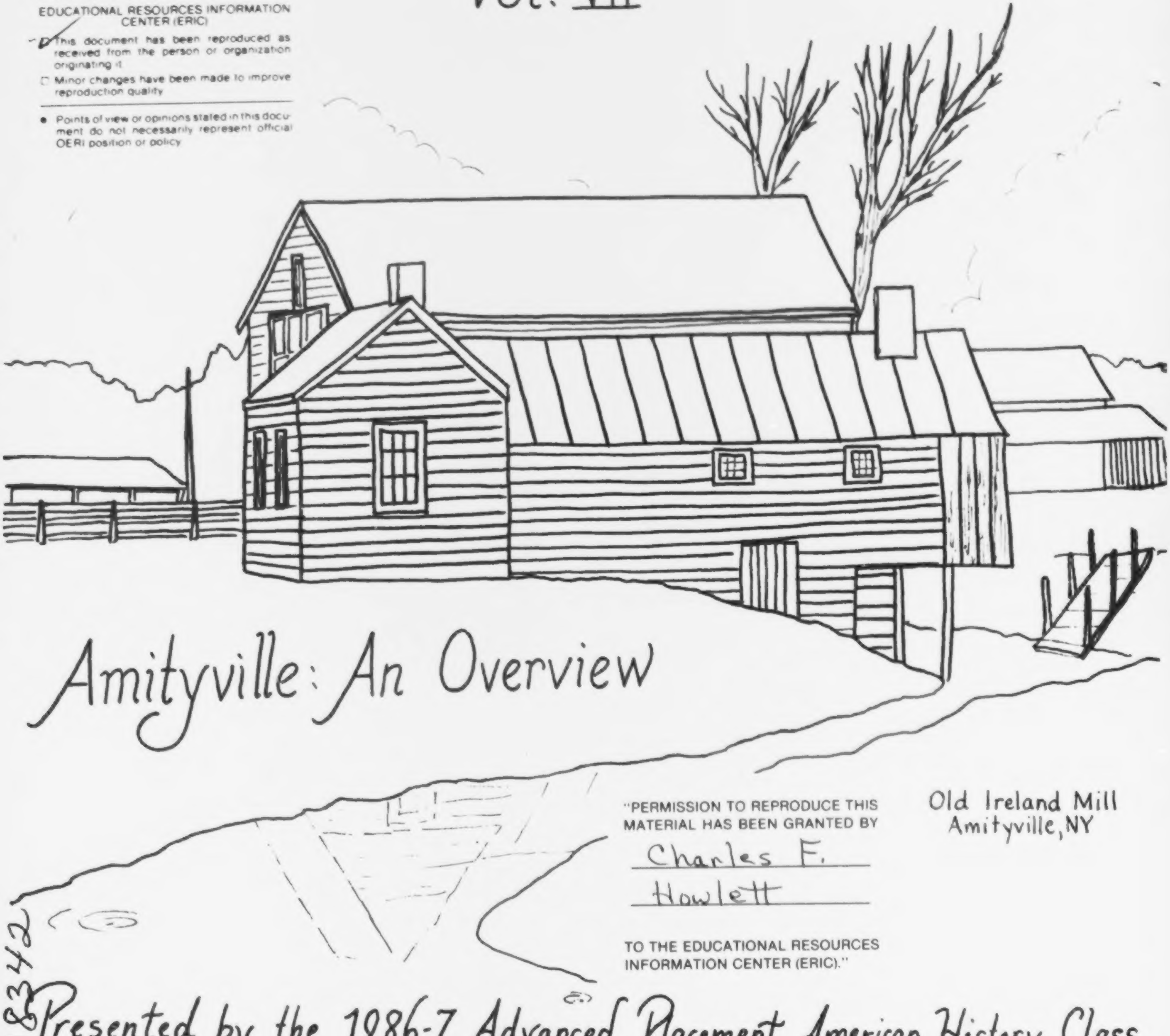

## Amityville: An Overview

Old Ireland Mill
Amityville, NY

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Presented by the 1986-7 Advanced Placement American History Class
Amityville Memorial High School
Amityville, N.Y.

C. J. ALBRECHT

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# EDITOR'S NOTE

This is the fourth successive issue of our student history journal dealing with the past history of Amityville. Though this is volume VII of our journal, the last four issues have been devoted to local history. The popularity of local history is widened by the number of publications and conferences devoted to the subject. Recently, Hofstra University sponsored a day-long conference to the research and study of Long Island's past. Well over two hundred educators attended. The Advanced Placement History class of Amityville Memorial High School is doing its part to make history come alive in their own community.

The use of oral history interviews, newspapers, and personal accounts are carefully documented in this issue. There is no one particular aspect of Amityville's history, unlike the past three issues, that students examined. They chose their own topics, researched available materials, and wrote the papers. Many of the articles are richly adorned with colorful and interesting photography. For the most part, organization and writing style has been worked on by the general editor. A few grammatical infelicities may have slipped by the editor's eye. But since this is a student project, it is important to let the work stand on its own merits. Please forgive misspelling of proper names should they exist. A deadline had to be met.

This particular issue pleases me greatly. The articles are interesting and varied. Architecture, family life, local landmarks, street names, the old hotels, The Dominican Sisters of Queen of the Rosary, famous visitors and the trolley line are presented in scholarly and fascinating detail. Even papers on government, the fire and police departments, the school system, and the village library, topics discussed in previous issues, offer new insights and observations. All the students, each in his or her own way, have fulfilled Jacques Barzun's observation that "the substances of what we think, though born in thought, must live in ink". Once again, thanks to Mrs. Celeste DeBono for typing this journal.

Charles F. Howlett, Ph.D.
Editor, Journal of Historical Inquiry

# ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr. Charles F. Howlett, the editor, teaches Advanced Placement American History and is Social Studies Chairperson. He received degrees from Marist College, SUNY at Albany, and Columbia University.

James Albrecht will be attending Cornell University this fall. He is interested in engineering.

Jack Bade will be attending the University of Houston this fall. He is interested in politics.

John Daley will be attending SUNY at Stony Brook this fall. He is interested in medicine.

Margaret Egan is considering attending the University of Notre Dame and majoring in pre-law.

Jennifer Galazin will be attending Boston College this fall. She is interested in business.

Karen Galazin will be attending Georgetown University this fall. She is interested in law.

Tammie Gregg is considering SUNY at Stony Brook and majoring in the sciences.

Debbie Kefer will attend Brandeis University this fall. She is interested in the arts and humanities.

Larry Korgood will attend New York Tech. He is interested in math and computers.

Janet Kutch will attend Marist College this fall. She is interested in the social sciences.

Daniel Lugo will attend Carleton College. He is interested in music and the arts.

Melissa MacGill will attend Colgate University this fall. She is interested in psychology.

Elizabeth Maurice will attend Oberlin this fall. She is interested in the humanities.

Millie Stewart is considering New York University with an interest in the liberal arts.

Peter Taddeo will attend SUNY at Buffalo. He is interested in math and the sciences.

Darren Walker will attend Harvard University this fall. He is interested in pre-law and public service.

Jeff Weisman will attend SUNY at Stony Brook. He is interested in the sciences.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Daniel Lugo and Darren Walker: "North Amityville's Founding Fathers: The Deterioration of Society" 1 - 6

II. James Albrecht and Deborah Kefer: "A Century of Service: The History of the Amityville Fire Department" 7 - 18

III. Melissa MacGill: The Seven Designated Local Landmarks of Amityville" 19 - 29

IV. Karen Galazin: "Amityville at the Turn of the Century: A Look at the Grand Old Hotels" 30 - 36

V. Jack Bade: "The Change in Architecture in Amityville From Colonial to Bungalow" 37 - 46

VI. Jennifer Galazin: "The Formative Years: A History of the Amityville Schools (1840 - 1906)" 47 - 51

VII. Larry Korgood: "The History of the Amityville Public Library" 52 - 55

VIII. Peter Taddeo: "The Development of the Amityville Police Department" 56 - 59

IX. Margaret Egan: "The Famous Who Have Been a Part of Amityville" 60 - 64

X. Janet Kutch: "The History of Amityville Streets" 65 - 70

XI. John Daley and Jeff Weisman: "Amityville Sports: A Written and Pictorial Study, 1920 - 1950" 71 - 80

XII. Tammie Gregg: "A Study of Amityville Government" 81 - 88

XIII. Elizabeth Maurice: "The Amityville Trolley" 89 - 97

XIV. Millie Stewart: "The Dominican Sisters of Amityville" 98 - 101

## I. NORTH AMITYVILLE'S FOUNDING FATHERS:

### The Deterioration of a Society

By Daniel Lugo and Darren Walker

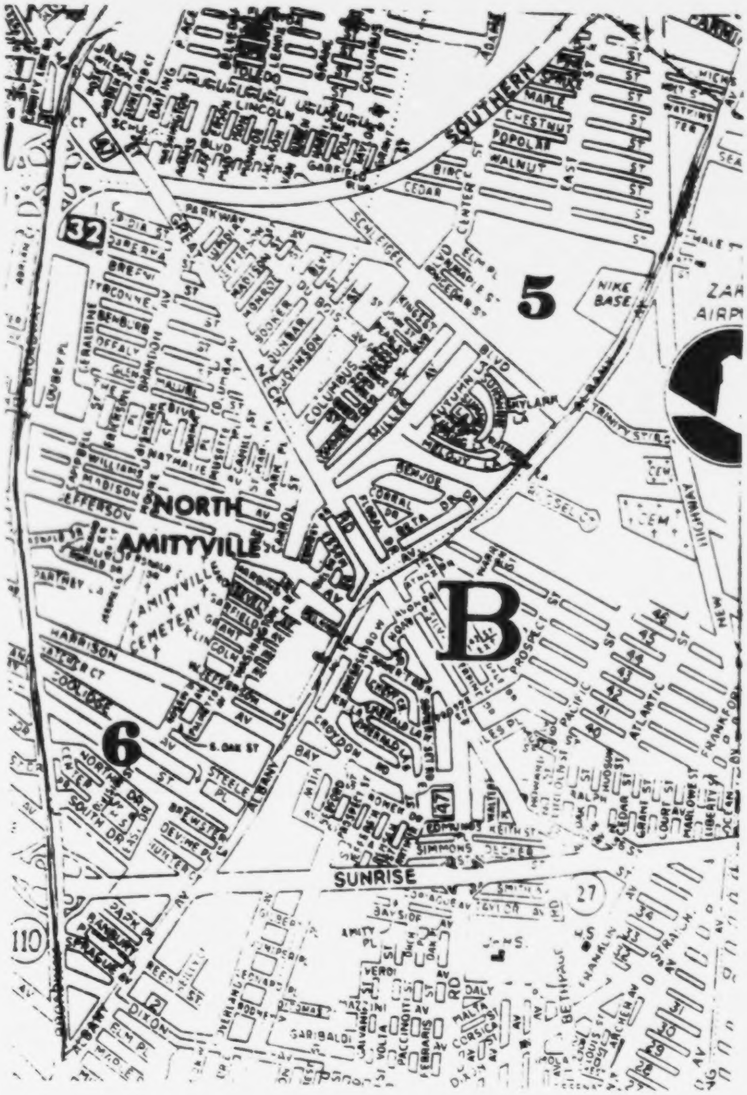
The Shinnecocks: native Americans, inhabitants of the East, a simple people who led their lives in harmony with nature and the ancient customs passed down through ancestry. In the early 17th Century, this nation set out for a new homeland. These Indians left the New England territory and traveled south in search of a new region where they could resume their practices of happiness, self-sufficiency, brotherhood, and unification under the omniscient Chief Nowdemoah. (1) For the majority of them, they realized their destination by traveling far out on Long Island into the area today known as South Hampton. However, all were not satisfied with the new settlement. The dissenters admired the aesthetic environment, and the good farming soil that was found some forty miles back from the new Shinnecock land. The small unsatisfied group bid the main tribe farewell and back-tracked to create their own homeland in that place they found so attractive. We now know it as North Amityville. The small tribe of Shinnecocks knew it as home.

As a youth growing up in North Amityville during the late 1900's, one would often hear of the greatness of the Shinnecock in the area, and the vast region of land that they occupied prior to the booming of housing development in the town. But the question arises as to what happened to them.

These Indians that settled between today's Dixon Avenue and New Highway were a very simple people. Farming was the basic means of occupation for all of the natives. Growing corn and potatoes was not done for the purpose of trade, but rather for basic survival. All of their food gathering methods were not centered upon farming. They were skilled hunters and trappers as well. Duck, rabbit and deer were the major game of the area. Although they were miles away from the main tribe, they still strived to carry on all aspects of the Shinnecock culture. For one, the traditional garb was worn at all times. Also, music and dance served as important expressions in their daily lives. Many a night, one could witness spectacular folkloric dancing, and ancestral singing and instrumentation. There was an emphasis on proper education. Though the Shinnecock did not attend a formal school setting, fundamental mathematics such as addition, history, by word of mouth, and survival techniques like using the bow and arrow, and hunting skills were ingrained in the minds of all the youngsters of the tribe. Overall, this simplistic lifestyle led to peace of mind and ebullient happiness.

For years, the dissident group of Indians lived happily and comfortably in the privacy of their small but more than adequate territory. But in 1640, a group of white settlers from a town called Huntington, located on the North Shore, purchased much of the southern bay area from a neighboring Indian tribe. (2) Because of the friendly encounters they experienced with the natives, they named their settlement Amity, meaning peace. However warm-hearted these new white pioneers were, from day one it was clearly evident that the white man's influence upon the North Amityville Indians would result in the loss of much of the traditional Shinnecock culture.

The name Amity fulfilled its true meaning when speaking of the relations between the Indians and the English inhabitants. Together, the two neighboring peoples enjoyed such things as fishing and hunting. These Indians would gather their farming surpluses, travel into the village, and barter with the white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ENTIRE FAMILY TERRITORY

residents. As rapport increased and advanced, they found the need to assimilate the ways of the "modern man" as displayed by the white people of the town. For example, the influence of the westerners inspired the Indians to abandon their belief in natural spirits and follow the study of Christianity. Furthermore, many aspects of culture such as the traditional clothing and observance of customary festivals were lost. Now, the western style of dress and holidays such as Christmas and Easter had taken precedence in their way of life. Perhaps most significant of the drastic changes was the Indians' undertaking of surnames. In reality, the North Amityville Indians were comprised of four distinct but related families. Each claimed a different name: Hunter, Devine, Brewster, and Fowler. In essence, assuming those surnames symbolized the disillusionment and forthcoming destruction concerning the Indians' way of life.

Over the span of the next 150 years, the Indian families experienced a slow but constant deterioration of the Shinnecock lifestyle. By the turn of the 20th Century, it seemed that the families were "Americanized" Indians rather than American Indians with a culture distinct from westernized thought. They were a people minus their traditional culture.

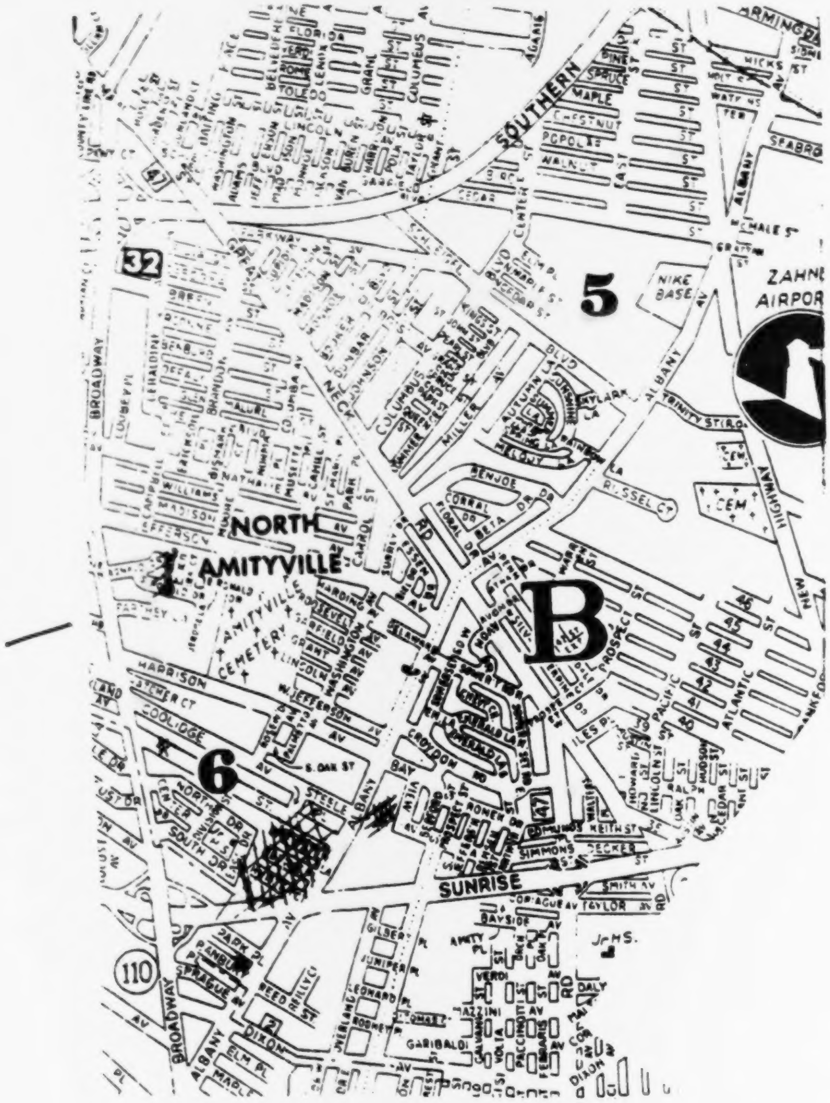
For the most part, the situations involving the Hunters were similar to those involving the Brewsters, Devines, and Fowlers. Therefore, it would be completely adequate to discuss one of the families in order to review the progression of lifestyle of the entire Indian community of the area. Because of the lack of sufficient representation and limited resources, the Fowler family proved to be the most logical source of reference for discussing local Indian history.

With the coming of the 1900's, the Fowlers were the most prominent of the four families. Headed by Alex Fowler, the family territory extended along Albany Avenue and Broadway to Dixon Avenue. (3) Farming was still the main means of employment; however, Alex utilized another aspect of nature, flowers, as his major source of income, as well as enjoyment. In the midst of this time of modernization, Mr. Fowler tried to preserve the Indian custom of man working closely with nature. But prior to his death, it was clearly evident that all hopes and attempts at regaining his ancestors' customs were futile. Alex Fowler's death symbolized the death of the final struggle for the true Shinnecock way of life. For his immediate descendants represented the "modern Fowler", a people absent of ancestral heritage, and fully acculturized in the American System. Philip Fowler, Alex Fowler's son, took over as head of the clan. In keeping with the diluting progression, Philip ventured out of his homeland in search of a mate. His goal was obtained upon reaching the North Shore of the island. In the town of Westbury, he found his wife to be. Audrey, a young, beautiful, black woman, was the daughter of a domestic servant in an affluent white community. Being that Philip was a devout Christian, he disregarded the customary Shinnecock wedding ceremony and chose to wed Audrey in 1926 through the Christian ministry. (4) The newlyweds returned to Philip's inherited property. The intermarriage of this black and Indian couple foreshadowed the many intermarital relationships that occurred in the near future. In the next year, the couple built a small house, room by room, on Banbury Court. With the coming of the Great Depression, the Fowlers experienced hardships. Mrs. Fowler reminisced about life during the 1930's:

> "It was rough. We talk about welfare now, (well,) we had... to stand on line and get... bread and... sugar and... flour, and things like that. That was issued out... and (we) had to use that (even though we were farmers). We couldn't make enough and so we would go down to the schools, and (food) would be issued out to you... It was rough. And then for (heat) we had potbelly stoves and they'd give us a big piece of coke and you'd put that in and that would burn all day, and give you all the heat you wanted... For 25¢ you'd get a bushel of coal or for a dollar you'd get maybe two bushels of coal or something like that. And that's how we lived. But everybody was nice to everybody else and everybody tried to help everyone." (5)

It was a time of pulling together and trying to make the best of the situation. Mr. Fowler worked for the Public Works Administration (on the highways) earning approximately twelve dollars a week. With the arrival of four children during this troublesome era, Mrs. Fowler, too, had to pitch in to make ends meet. "I used to make a big garden, 100 by 100. We (grew as much as we could)." (6) In addition, she'd also save money by making the family clothes. "We... lived the American way of life," she said, "if America had hard times, we had hard times." (7)

For the Fowlers, the Great Depression, and the soon to follow, World War II marked the economic collapse of the family's financial standards and property holdings. After Philip returned home from the war, he found the family in a state of financial crisis. The drastic increase in property taxes caused the Fowlers, as well as their relatives (Hunters, Brewsters, Devines), to be in great debt with the local government. Because of the combination of being desperate for money and the facile availability of land offers by eager developers, it was quite logical for Mr. Fowler, as well as the heads of the other three families, to decide to slowly liquidate his land assets by means of selling to white land developers. This procedure led to the late 1940's housing boom in the North Amityville area. Thus, the Indians' misfortune resulted in the migration of blacks from the South and New York City into the area and the formation of the North Amityville black community that is still alive and thriving today. "(We had to sell) we needed that money", said Mrs. Fowler. The transition was now complete; first they had lost their culture, now they'd lost their land.



REMAINING FAMILY LAND

In the 1950's, the family leaders realized the sadness of their present state. The American way of life destroyed all aspects of their Indian inheritance. With this new sense of awareness, the leaders decided to attempt to rectify the results of centuries of corrupted ideology. Their first step was to socially separate from the neighboring blacks and try to obtain the non-black status of American Indian. In doing so, marriage with outsiders was frowned upon and intermarriage within the four families was encouraged. Because of the fact that so many of them either died or left the area, the selection of mates was very closely related. Thus, incestial gene disfigurements caused many chemical imbalances resulting in the immediate descendants. (9)

With the failure of the first plan, anger and frustration set in among the families. With no one to use as a scapegoat, the families blamed each other for the downfall of their once beautiful lifestyle. Family feuds, characterized by gang-like fighting, typified family relations of the late 1960's. With practically all of the land sold, they quarreled over the rights to the meager property that still remained.

Today, almost all ties between the families and ancient Shinnecock culture are lost. When viewing the current generation of Hunters, Devines, Brewsters, and Fowlers, one would not notice that they are of Indian origin except upon hearing the last name. Today's family members are not as concerned with re-establishing the Indian culture as opposed to the previous generation. They are content with being black American citizens. This fact is exemplified in the statements of one of the brighter members of the family. "Mrs. Jackson (a local black history historian) could probably tell you more about my ancestors than I can." This statement characterizes the general lack of concern by many of the descendants given to their ancestors of the not so distant past.

In reality, the last existing tie between old and new is the small amount of property scattered throughout the original domain. Even though there were streets named in the families' honors, this, by no means, is adequate compensation for the contributions of the early Shinnecock settlers to the lives of present-day North Amityville citizens.

Perhaps the Fowler family represents the last frontier in preserving Amityville Shinnecock history. "We teach them (the Shinnecock tradition) when they're young", says Mrs. Audrey Fowler, "It belongs to them... they will always carry it on." However small the amount of knowledge that is in existence to be passed on, Mrs. Fowler should be commended by all for her effort. For she serves as the only glimmer of hope for the future generations to come.

"The road never stopped there...
It means it has to keep going...
(As for me) I have to keep going...
(Philip) has stopped, I keep going,
And the road never stop there...
You have to keep going...
You must push... and push hard."

- Mrs. Audrey Fowler

## ENDNOTES

1. David Gustafsen, Indian Tribes (New York, 1963), pg. 30.
2. William T. Lauder, A Brief History of Amityville (New York, 1973), pg. 3.
3. Taken from an interview with Mrs. Audrey Fowler, March 20, 1987.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Taken from an interview with L. Gerard, January 27, 1987.

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Interview with Mrs. L. Gerard, January 27, 1987

Interview with Mrs. V. Jackson, March 20, 1987.

## II. A CENTURY OF SERVICE

### The History of the Amityville Fire Department

James Albrecht and Deborah Kefer

Picture yourself in Amityville at the turn of the century. Suddenly the silence of the little Bay Village is broken by the "clang, clang" of the fire alarm. All over Amityville, men drop what they're doing, grab their helmets, and race to the scene to man the hand pump used to extinguish the blaze. Such was a typical fire call in the Amityville area in the period 1886 - 1913.

On May 6, 1986, the Amityville Fire Department celebrated its centennial of service to the community. During its hundred year history, the Amityville Fire Department has seen its share of spectacular blazes. It has seen the advent of motorized fire equipment, as well as the use of chemicals to combat fires. Through it all, the fire department has remained a reliable, ever-present source of security for the people of Amityville.

In the beginning, Amityville and the surrounding communities had no organized protection against dangerous fires. The population had to rely on the so-called "bucket brigades", men who would run to the fire with leather buckets filled with water. These so-called bucket brigades were, until the 1880's, the only source of fire protection for the Amityville area.

In the late 1880's, it was decided that what Amityville needed was an organized company for the protection against fires. Thus, on May 6, 1886, at the King's Hotel, the Amityville Hook and Ladder Company No. 1 was established, and set up headquarters in a small wood-frame building (which was later enlarged in 1891) on Greene Avenue. The first equipment of the Hook and Ladder Company was horse-drawn, with the horses being kept at the Powell Livery Stable on Broadway. Spirits were high and dues were low - "the volunteers paid a mere quarter for membership". (1)

In 1893, the Hook and Ladder Company was joined by the Hose Compay No. 1, which consisted of sixteen members, 15 - 18 years old. They used a hand-drawn hose and ladder, and operated from a hose house along the Amityville River on Merrick Road.

The fire departments remained separate entities, answering their own calls and engaging in their own social activities until the year 1905. On November 18, 1905, the Hook and Ladder Company No. 1, the Hose Company No. 1, and another independent local fire company, the Dauntless Hose Company, merged to form the Amityville Fire Department. Despite their unification as a single organization, each retained their own headquarters and equipment.

The early years of the fire department were less than hectic. In fact, from 1905 - 1907, the "second floor of the headquarters building was used as a classroom for the Amityville Grammar School". (2)

Less than one month after the consolidation of the fire companies, the Amityville Fire Department was put to its first test, when the Great South Bay Hotel on Ocean Avenue burned in an unmanageable fire.

Up until 1912, all fire equipment was either hand-drawn or horse-drawn. In 1912, however, a revolution occurred in the way fires were fought in Amityville. In that year, the Amityville Fire Department purchased a 1910 Johnson automobile on a Ford chassis, for the astronomical price of $1284! (3) This was the first piece of motorized equipment in either Nassau or Suffolk County. It was shipped to Amityville as a chassis, and the body was then constructed by a local carpenter. Sadly enough, however, the present whereabouts of this little piece of history does not remain in Amityville. Due to a lack of storage room, the car was sold to a private collector for $10, and is now located somewhere in Connecticut.

In 1914, a Chemical Hose Company was established. This company was useful in controlling many hazardous fires, as the "chemicals worked better than water". (4)

By 1923, the wooden-frame building had become too small for the Hook and Ladder Company. Therefore a new brick structure was built to replace it on the same site. The new building housed the Amityville Police Department as well as the Hook and Ladder Company. The 1886 building was purchased by the Amityville Record, and the structure was moved to its present location, attached to the east of the original site. A small rear portion was converted into a home on William Street. In 1979, the Record offices were demolished except for the old firehouse. Plans have been made for its restoration, though they have not as yet been carried out.

In 1921, a police box, manned with one police officer, was installed in the village on Broadway and Greene Avenues. This police box contained the only key to the fire department headquarters. And on thus is based the story of the nervous policeman and the key to the fire department. It seems that when this policeman received the alarm, he panicked, grabbed the key, threw it out of the police box, while shouting "Fire! Fire!" When the firemen arrived, they had to search for the key before being able to respond to the alarm. (5)

The history of the fire alarm is almost as interesting as the history of the fire department itself. When the department was first established, there was no real "siren" available. Instead, the fire department made use of an old locomotive wheel suspended in the air. (6) This arrangement actually worked very well, for, when struck, the wheel made a loud "bonging" sound which could, in those days, be heard throughout the village. This locomotive wheel still exists today, and is situated in front of the Fire Department's present headquarters. After the steam engine wheel, an air pressure horn was installed, affectionately known even today as "Old Heartbreaker," which was even more effective for summoning the members of the fire team. (7) However, as always, as technology advances, there is an increased chance of mishaps, and the fire siren was no exception to the rule. Many were the times when the fire horn became jammed and blew continuously. On one notable occasion on March 22, 1927, the air horn became stuck after sending out the signal, and blew raucously for two whole minutes before someone had the good sense to turn off the air pressure. (8) It is a wonder that the department did not change the horn's name to "Old Earbreaker!!"

The years of 1926 and 1927 were busy ones for the fire department. In all, during these two years, the company answered a total of 52 alarms. The majority of these were in Amityville; however, during this period, the department also served Copiague, Massapequa, and North Amityville. The breakup of alarms by town in 1926 - 1927, answered by the Amityville Fire Department, is as follows:

Amityville - 5 general alarm (large fires), 18 still alarms (small fires)
North Amityville - 4 general alarms, 7 still alarms
Massapequa - 2 general alarms, 7 still alarms
Copiague - 3 general alarms, 6 still alarms

The hamlet of Copiague "was served by the Amityville Fire Department for no charge," however, Copiague supported the Amityville department by attending many of their social functions. (10) In 1927, however, the Amityville Fire Department terminated its service to Copiague, which was then placed under the protection of the Lindenhurst Fire Department. (11)

The year 1927 almost saw the breakup of the Amityville Fire Department as well. The Dauntless Hose Company wanted to split its 35 members and form an additional company. This company, which would be known as the Dauntless Hose Company No. 5, would be housed north of the Railroad tracks. However, the break did not occur. It was said that there was "no animosity" involved. (12) Instead, it was decided to remodel the old firehouse, and place the company's Stutz engine north of the tracks. As a result of this arrangement, "each company now (had) its own engine." (13)

In 1940, the North Amityville Fire Company was established to serve the then "sparsely-populated community". "Its first truck was kept at a local gas station." (14) It acquired its own firehouse in 1941, which was replaced in 1955 by a new brick structure.

After World War II, the Amityville Fire Department decided to invest in some new equipment. In 1946, the company purchased a 1939 Mack pumper truck, "capable of pumping 750 gallons per minute". (15) This piece of fire equipment became the pride of the department, and after years of service, was handed over to the North Amityville company when Amityville acquired its first aerial truck.

From Chief C. B. Austin to Chief George Lang III, the Amityville Fire Department has seen its share of major blazes. The first alarm to which the company responded was sounded in August of 1893. Baldwin's barn was ablaze. Unfortunately, the barn was a total loss.

A large fire was started by lightning on July 22, 1908, at the Park Avenue School. The fire became so large that two carts were necessary to extinguish the flames.

One of the major fires in Amityville History was the fire at the Lyceum Theater Hall on Broadway on June 1, 1917. Considerable damage was also inflicted upon the interior of the building due to the pumping of gallons and gallons of water into the theater building.

In 1923, the Brodkin Hat Factory building, which still stands adjacent to the Lauder Museum on Park Avenue, caught fire. The blaze "started in a pile of straw on the top floor of the building". (16) The flimsy wooden construction of the factory building allowed the flames to spread rapidly. The blaze became so large and uncontrollable that the Lindenhurst Fire Department lent its pumper to help. Firemen carried books from the public library next door, and put them in the Avon Theatre in the Triangle for safety. (17) While battling the blaze, the Lindenhurst fire team noticed the effectiveness of the Amityville Chemical Hose Company. So impressed were they that they started a chemical hose company in their own department. Despite the effort of the two departments, the entire roof was destroyed, and the Brodkin Hat Company was no more.

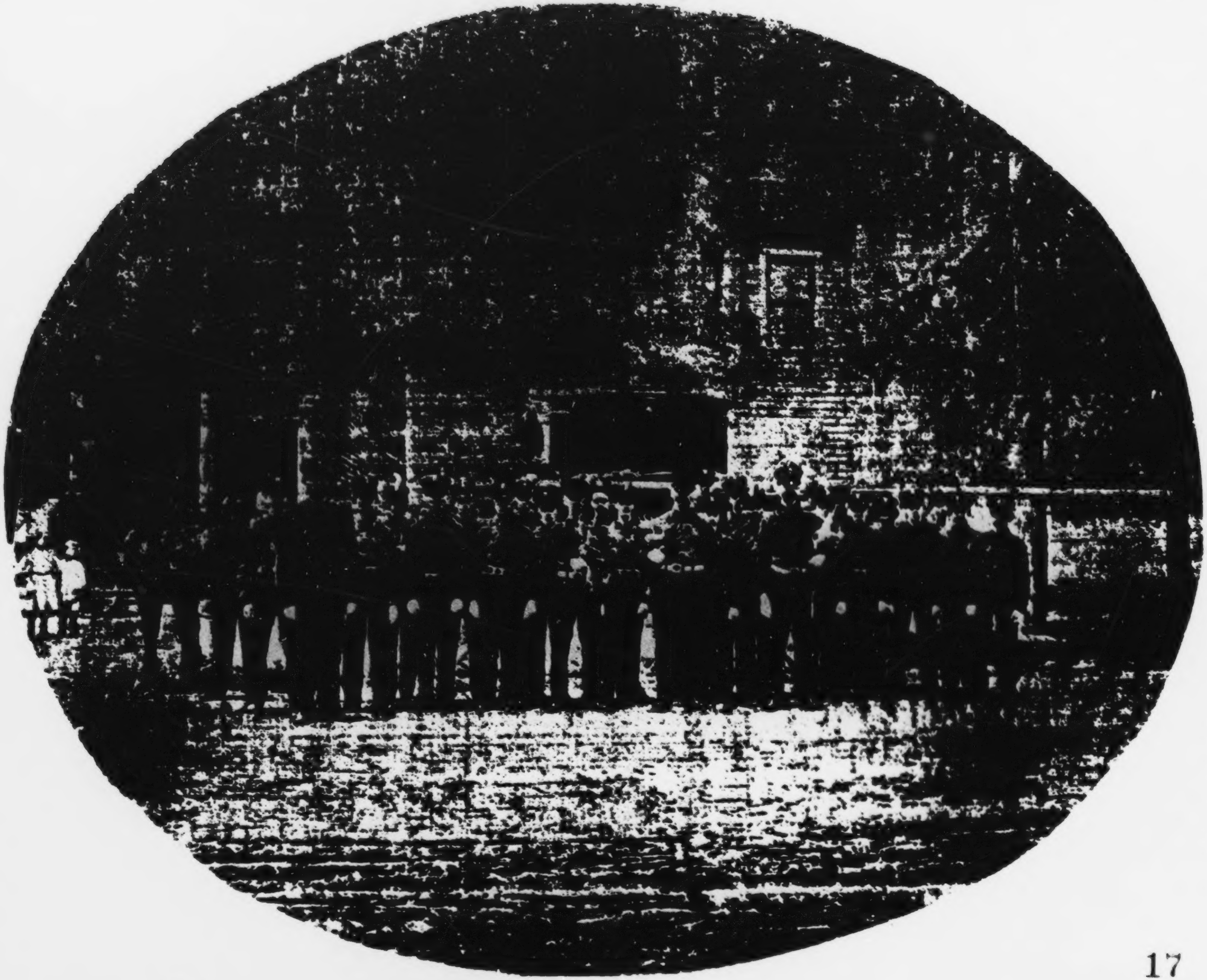
In 1940, the alarm was once again sounded. This time, it was the Brunswick Home that was ablaze. Despite the efforts of the firemen, seven people lost their lives in the conflagration.

One of the largest fires in Amityville history took place on December 6, 1962. This time, the flames destroyed the Newpoint Hotel, which was situated at the end of Grand Central Avenue on the Great South Bay. The fire, once under way, spread rapidly, and quickly engulfed the entire building. Within a few minutes, the entire building was consumed. The blaze was so huge that "a passing Pan-American jet on its way to Europe circled the area", in order to give the passengers a good view of the holocaust. (18) The next day, only the foundations remained of what was once a popular resort hotel.

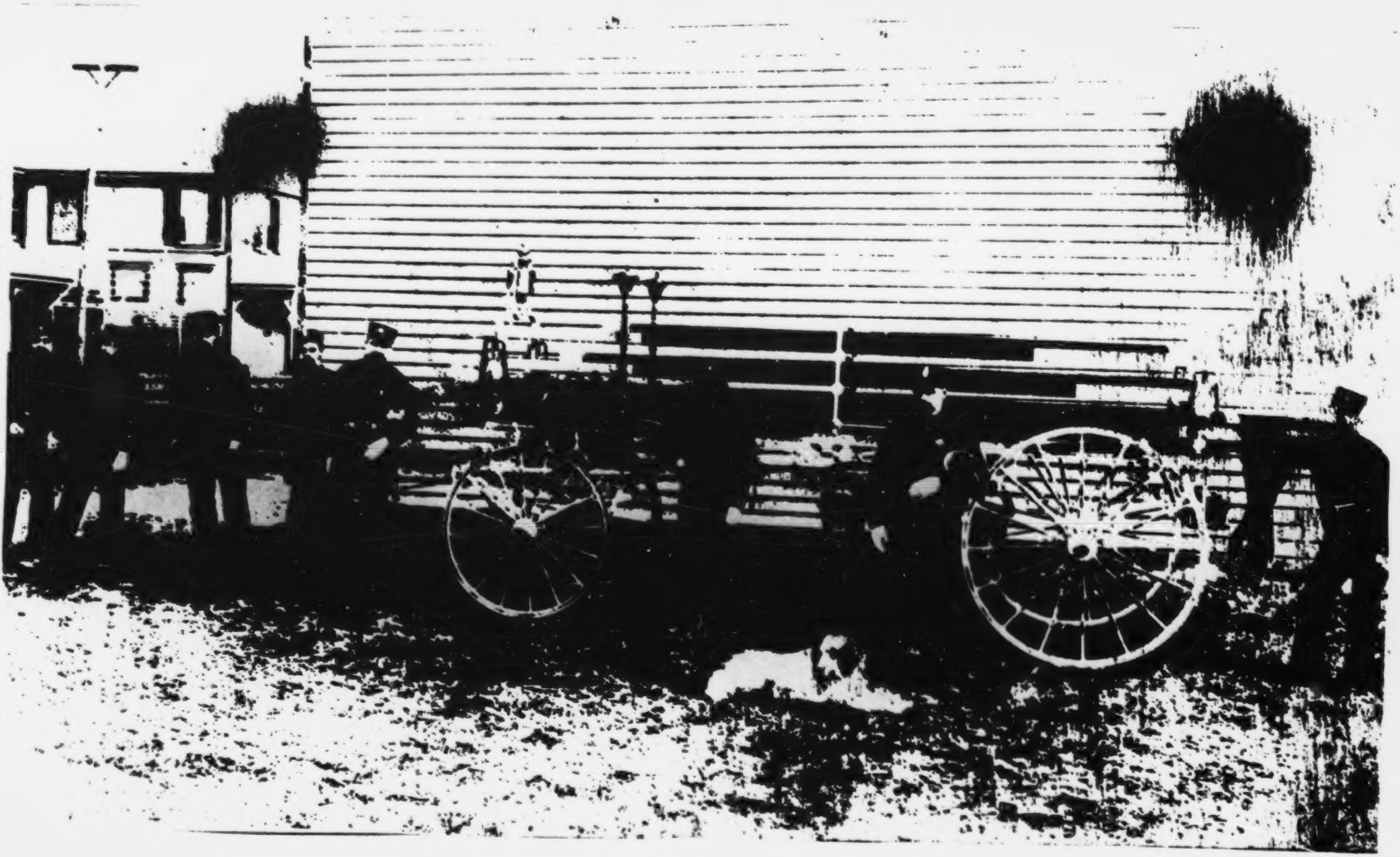
In recent years, the fire department has expanded its operations to encompass more areas of service. One of these was the rescue squad. Formed in 1973, the rescue squad renders first aid to accident victims.

With the growth of the Village of Amityville, both commercially and residentially, it was no longer practical to house both the fire department and the police department in the same building. Therefore, the Amityville Fire Department decided to relocate its headquarters. In 1977, a new headquarters building was constructed on the corner of West Oak Street and Ketcham Avenue, on the old site of the Henry Leigh Livery Stable. This building serves as the administrative headquarters, as well as housing fire equipment.

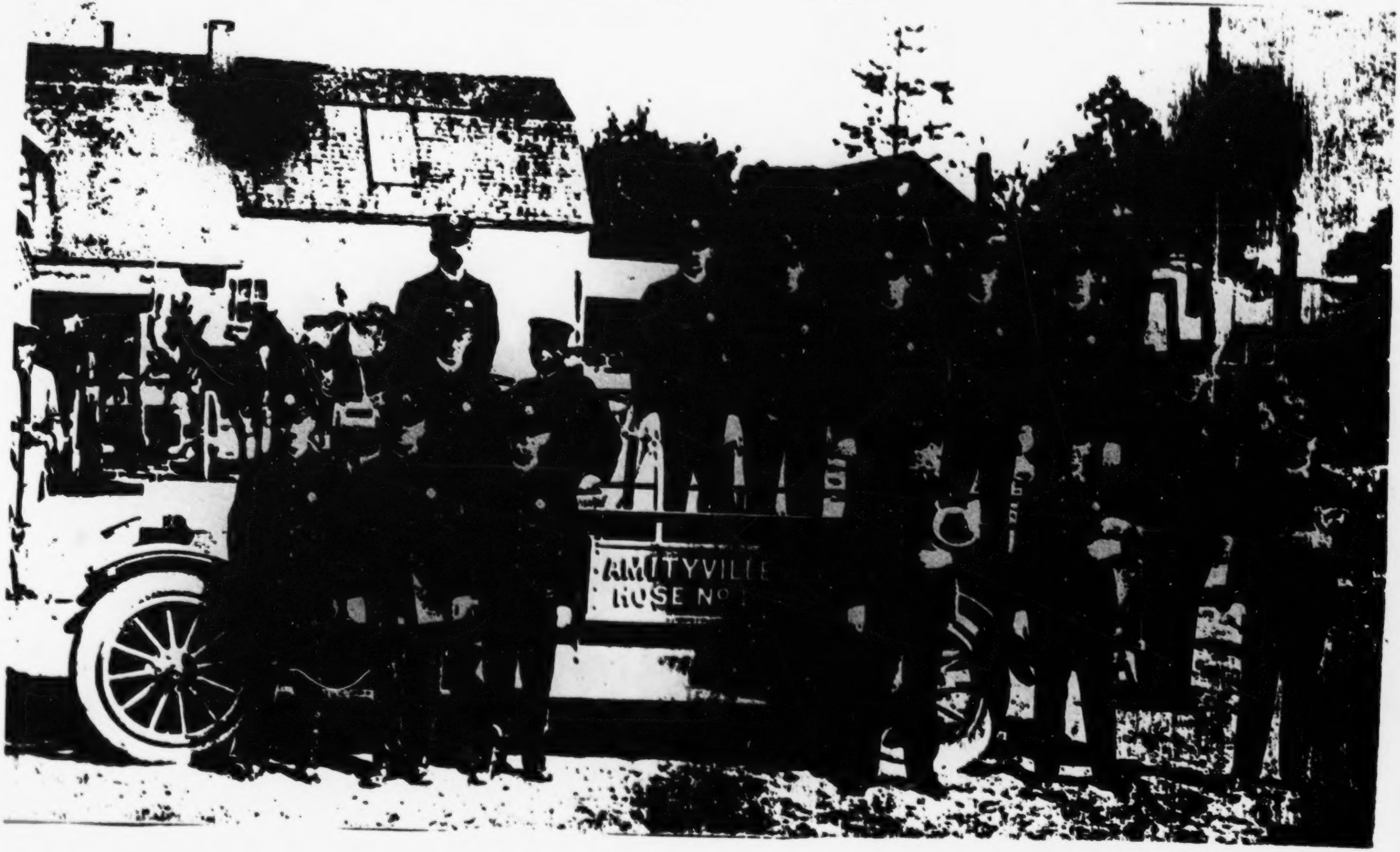
It is now one hundred years after that eventful day in 1886 when the Hook and Ladder Company No. 1 was established. Picture yourself once again in Amityville. It is now the year 1987. The fire alarm sounds. This time instead of the clang of the old locomotive wheel, the atmosphere is shattered by the wail of the air siren. Instead of men zipping by lugging hand pumps and leather buckets, you jump to the side of the road as a red fire truck speeds by, it's sirens blaring and lights flashing. Times have definitely changed.



Amityville Fire Department Pictured Around The Turn of the Century

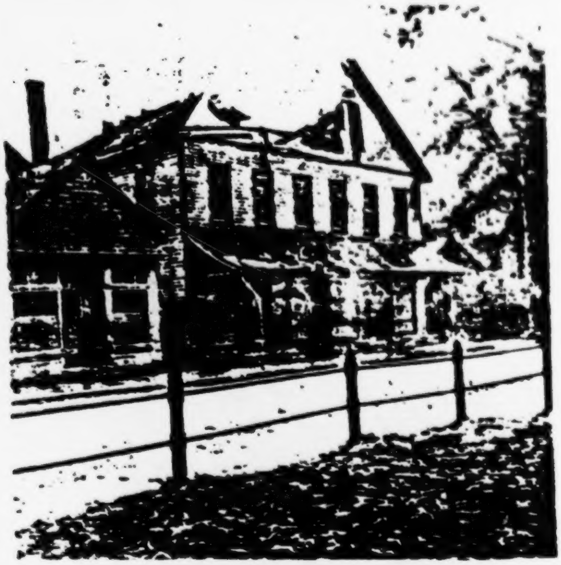


Amityville Hook and Ladder Company No. 1, 1895


AMITYVILLE
HOSE No

First Motorized Fire Equipment in Nassau and Suffolk Counties

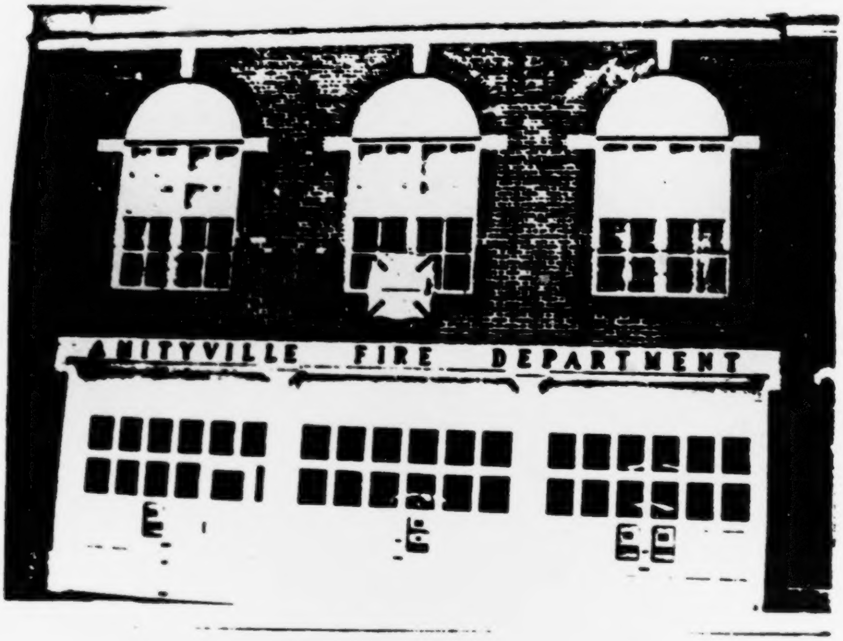
1939 Mack Pumper Truck



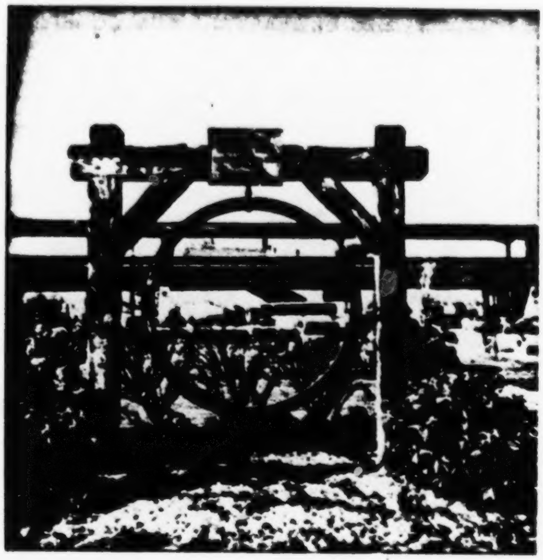
Remains of Brodkin Hat Factory, 1923

First Firehouse as it Stands Today

Huntington Trolley Heading Past Hook and Ladder Co. No. 1

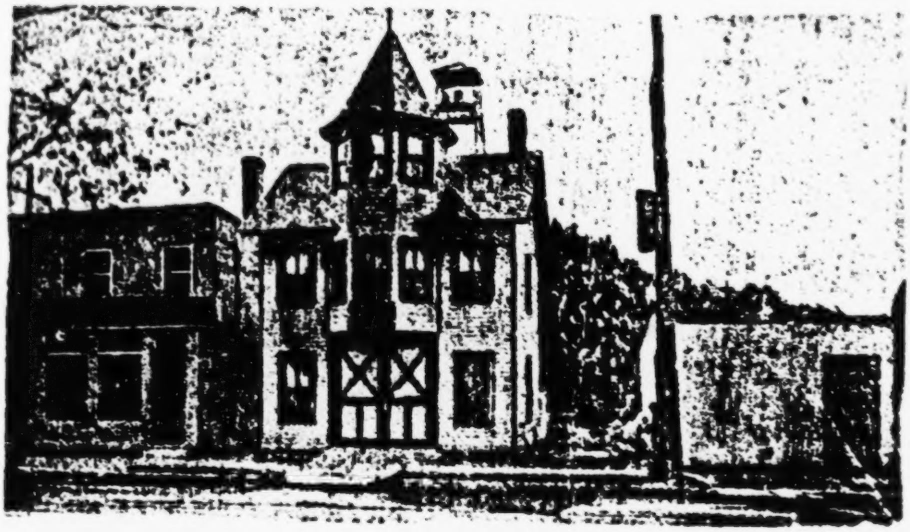

AMITYVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Firehouse in 1974



Locomotive Wheel Used as First Fire Alarm

Amityville Fire Department Built in 1977



Hook and Ladder Company No. 1, Built in 1886

We wish to thank Mr. Seth Purdy Jr., Mr. Al Wells, and Mrs. Ethel MacGill for their assistance.

# ENDNOTES

1. Interview with Mr. Al Wells February 25, 1987
2. Discussion with Mr. Seth Purdy Jr. March 17, 1987
3. Interview with Mr. Al Wells February 25, 1987
4. Discussion with Mr. Seth Purdy Jr. March 17, 1987
5. Ibid
6. Interview with Mr. Al Wells February 25, 1987
7. Discussion with Mr. Seth Purdy Jr. March 17, 1987
8. Amityville Record March 27, 1927
9. Amityville Record April 29, 1927
10. Discussion with Mr. Seth Purdy Jr. March 17, 1987
11. Ibid
12. Amityville Record April 29, 1927
13. Amityville Record May 20, 1927
14. Discussion with Mr. Seth Purdy Jr. March 17, 1987
15. Interview with Mr. Al Wells February 25, 1987
16. Ibid
17. Ibid
18. Ibid

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Amityville Record, September 17, 1981

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Seth Purdy Jr. and Elodie Dibbins, A Backward Glance, New York 1980

Seth Purdy Jr. and Elodie Dibbins, Amityville Remembers: A Pictorial History 1880-1920, New York 1986

Interview with Mr. Al Wells, February 25, 1987

# III. THE SEVEN DESIGNATED LOCAL LANDMARKS OF AMITYVILLE

Melissa MacGill

On January 10, 1985, at the Village Hall, Amityville Mayor Victor S. Niemi, Marilyn David, director of the Landmarking Project, and three gentlemen for the N.Y. State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Merrill Hesch, Austin O'Brien and Larry E. Gobrecht met to discuss and begin a survey of Amityville historic sites. In February, O'Brien and Hesch returned to Amityville to review and compile a list of prospective landmark sites. Out of forty-eight structures, seven were chosen to be given landmark status. On June 14, 1986, the owners of these homes were presented with circa plaques by the Amityville Historical Society and the Amityville Community Council at the Lauder Museum in Amityville.

Although these houses have been recognized as landmark sites, as of now they are not listed on either the State or the National Register of Historic Places. To be considered for these registers, a sponsor for the structure needs to provide a draft nomination form to the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. This form must contain detailed historical and architectural information, which determines whether a property meets the criteria for eligibility. If it is eligible, the property is reviewed by the State Board for History and it is recommended to the Commissioner. After this, it is nominated to both the State and National Registers.

There are benefits to being listed.

1. Registered properties and properties determined eligible for the Registers receive a measure of protection from the effects of federal and/or state agency sponsored or assisted projects through a notice, review and consultation process.

2. Owners of depreciable, certified properties may take a 25 percent federal income tax credit for the costs of certified properties, substantial rehabilitation as provided for under the Economic Recovery Act of 1981 (P.L. 97-34).

3. Registered properties receive priority consideration from federal and state agencies in space rental or leasing. (Public Buildings Cooperative Use Act of 1976 and New York State Historic Preservation Act of 1980, Section 4b.)

4. Owners of registered properties may apply for 50 percent matching grants-in-aid for preservation work (subject to available funding).

The owner of a private registered property is not restricted from selling, disposing of or changing their property. But an owner who demolishes a certified property must not deduct the costs of demolition from his/her income tax according to the Economic Recovery Tax Act, 1981. (1)

To get a building designated as a local landmark, it must meet the criteria set up by the Amityville Historical Society.

1. The structure or the main portion of the structure shall be 100 years old or more*; and/or

2. The structure**, as a whole, substantially represents a particular architectural style;

3. The structure contains significant architectural details, ornamentation or stylistic elements which are indicative of a certain architectural period; and/or

4. The site is significant in local political, social or cultural history.

* The age of a structure shall be established by competent and reliable proof furnished by the owner.

** Any structure, whether used for residential, commercial, industrial or recreational purposes may qualify. The structure need not be located on its original site nor must its current use be similar to its use when originally erected. (2)

50 Broadway: 1832

This structure of Queen Anne Style stands on the corner of Broadway and Cedar Street. It is a clapboard structure, which means it has long narrow boards that have one edge thicker than the other, which overlap. The house is noted for its Victorian details: the Queen Anne/East Lake style dormers and the front porch, which were added in 1875. The late nineteenth century chimneys and stickwork gables are still unimpaired.

This house was originally built to be the meeting house of the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Amityville in 1823. Prior to this, church members met in private homes and the school house. Probable members of the church were parts of the Ketcham and Chichester families, two prominent names in Amityville. (3) In 1845, the building was sold, moved to its present location and became the residence of Mr. N. Williams. A new meeting house was built on South Road. According to a map of Broadway drawn in 1873, the home was still in the possession of Williams. Some time after this year, it was sold to Dr. Leroy

VanWinkle. The sales record found in the Amityville Hall of Records begins in 1925. At this point, the house was owned by Mr. Joseph M. Livingston. After this, the building was sold eight times in thirty-nine years. At some point, aluminum sashes and a new door were added and the building was renovated to hold offices. From 1974 until this year, 1987, the structure was owned by the Broadcedar Realty Corporation. It has recently been sold to Mr. Richard Handler, an Amityville resident who plans to move his law office from Garden City to this building at 50 Broadway.

The house is considered to be in good condition and there is no indication that it was ever a meeting house.

54-56 Broadway: 1835

The home located at 54-56 Broadway, on the corner of Cedar Street, was built in 1835 by Daniel Ketcham in 1935. It is a structure constructed of Clapboard and shingles with a wood frame with interlocking joints.

Daniel Ketcham resided there with his wife and his two daughters, Lillie and Anna. Anna was a teacher of young children. They were both devout episcopalians. (4) The home was still owned by Daniel in 1873, according to the map of this year. In 1880, the structure was remodeled to reflect the design of 50 Broadway, the building on the other corner of Cedar Street. Three dormers, the front porch and the central bay windows were added. The interior of the house was renovated to hold two apartments. There were no significant twentieth century alterations. It is presently owned by Margaret VanNostrand.

Notable characteristics of this house are the small circular cellar and the rear door with the initial "K" etched in the glass, which is original. On the property, there is a 100-year old boxwood tree. The home is noted to be in excellent condition.

In 1830, Platt Ketcham built his homestead on the lot that is now considered 64 Broadway. It is a one and a half story, shingled, three bay residence with decorative molding beneath the front roof.

Platt Ketcham and his wife, Deborah Brush Ketcham, were the parents of several sons who also built homes in the nearby area. Platt died in 1857, but on the 1858 and 1873 maps he is listed as the owner of this home and the land on which it stands. It appears that his widow remained here after he passed away. There is a gap in the records until 1930, where it is recorded that the owner was Mr. Harry P. Fishel. In this year, he sold it back to the Ketcham family. Thomas Ketcham bought the residence and sold it the following year. There is an indenture dated July 30, 1931, made between Thomas Ketcham and Eliza Kupriam. Eliza Kupriam died in 1943. In her will, she left the property to her daughter, Louise Rauth. The next available indenture shows the next sale was a change in

64 Broadway: 1830

name of ownership. Louise Rauth sold the home to herself and her son, Charles Rauth. In 1965, Charles Rauth sold the building to Margaret VanNostrand, a well known Amityville resident.

During 1920, under the probable ownership of Harry P. Fishel, the building was renovated. It was converted into a two family residence with one apartment downstairs and one upstairs. Since the house was built with a side hall plan, it was necessary for the first floor doorway in the hall to be closed to make this conversion. Another bathroom and the dormers of casements were also added at this time.

On the request for Local Landmark status, the house is noted to be in excellent condition. Though at the present moment, it seems not to have been maintained. The entire structure needs a coat of paint and where the front and east wall meet, there is a crack near the foundation.

77 Broadway: 1836

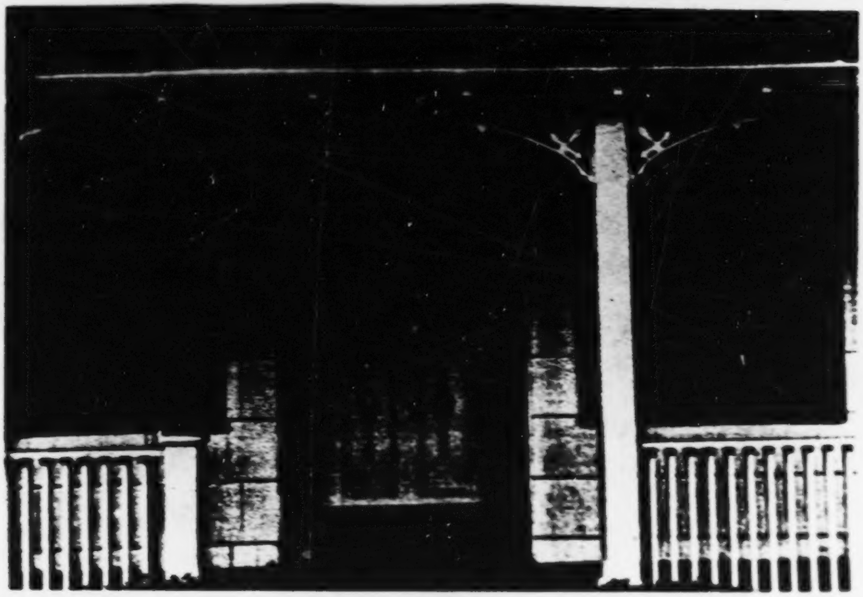
The "Bennett House" at 77 Broadway is a shingled, wood frame structure with interlocking joints. This building was the residence of its builder, Solomon Ketcham. It was constructed in 1836 for a dollar a day, but how many days it took to build is not recorded. (5) During this time, Amityville was part of the town of Huntington, in which Solomon Ketcham was an outstanding citizen. He was a farmer, a bayman and an overseer of the town. Solomon Ketcham was married to Esther Wanser and the two parented five children. Solomon's father and his brothers, Daniel and Tredwell also owned homes in the surrounding area. (6) Solomon passed away in 1898. According to the Ketcham Geneology, both his wife, Esther, and his son, Solomon Jr., died on the same day, December 10, 1928. In the years following, Solomon's sister, Mrs. George Bennett resided in this home for many years. The next owners of this home are recorded as Dorothy and David Stevens. It is presently owned by the Chalet Leasing Corporation and houses the offices of Snow and Depew, an advertising firm.

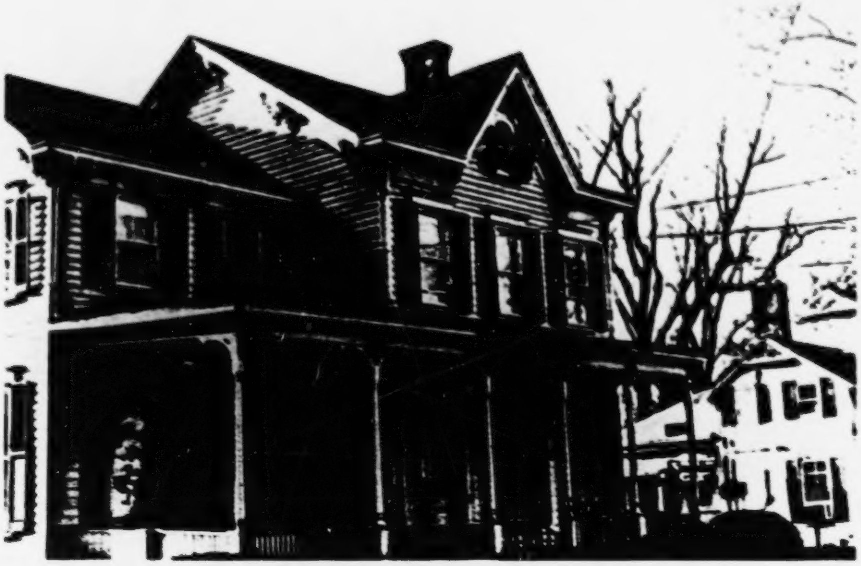
In 1940, the building was moved to the east of the property in order to avoid the widening of Broadway. Its position to the street was not altered, the front facade always faced south, not towards the street. At this time, there were modifications to the structure. The cornice of the roof was changed, the side porch was altered and the front porch entry was removed.

74 Broadway: 1792

The Jesse Smith homestead at 74 Broadway is the oldest remaining home on this road. It was built in 1792 when Jesse Smith moved to Amityville, which was known as Huntington West Neck South. Smith borrowed $319 from James Nostrand for the first mortgage on the home and the 40 acres of land on which it sat. (7) In 1793, the Huntington Town Board met in this house. (8) In 1873, Smith was still recorded as the owner. The veranda was added in 1880 and the south wing was added in 1920. The sales record at the Amityville Hall of Records begins in 1935. At this time, it was owned by Mr. Joseph C. Bingham. Presently, it is owned by Mr. Jerold E. Nemetz and is used for offices and an apartment.

It is a clapboard, shingled structure with a wood frame with interlocking joints. There were extensive alterations on the interior. Asbestos shingles were added. Also, the front door is a reproduction. The building is acknowledged as being in good condition.





80 Broadway: 1880

Next to the Jesse Smith homestead is the building known as the "Irving Powell House". Its circa date is 1880 and the house number is 80 Broadway. It is a structure of Queen Anne style. The wood frame has interlocking joints with light members. The house has been well maintained, the veranda, siding and chimneys are original.

This residence was the home of prominent Amityville families (obviously including the Powell's) during the period of 1880 - 1940. The first entry on the sales record of 80 Broadway states that Mr. William E. Day Jr. and Mr. J. D. Bosquit jointly owned the property. Presently, Mrs. Margaret VanNostrand is the proprietor of the building.

It is a two story structure with a three bay, side entrance hall. There is a dependent wing to the south, and a small wing in the rear. The main structure has a central pediment with round headed windows. The building presently houses offices with apartments upstairs. Also in the rear, there are rental units.

53 Broadway: 1850

The building that is now the home of the law firm of VanNostrand and Martin was built in 1850. In 1821, the land on which this home stands was bought by Platt Ketcham and was conveyed to his son Tredwell. Although his father and many of his brothers were farmers in the town that is now known as Amityville, Tredwell was employed in New York City in the securities business. He moved to Amityville in 1850 to build his home. In 1890, two sisters of Tredwell, Julia Ann and Clarissa Ketcham were noted to have occupied this house. At this time, the roof was replaced and the room on the south side with the tin ceiling was added. Around the turn of the century, a Mr. Paye bought the building. During his ownership, the front porh and the south wing were added. Some time after, Dr. Thomas J. Seaman bought the residence and lived there with his wife up to the time of his death in 1962. Mrs. Seaman continued to reside here until she passed away in 1966. In 1969, the structure was purchased by LeRoy VanNostrand and Humbert O. Martin. According to the Amityville Record, the firm moved into the building soon after it was bought. Another source claims the interior wasn't converted into law offices until 1972. A client of VanNostrand claims to have discussed business with him in 1970. (10) In 1975, the rental units were added in the rear.

The "Dr. Seaman House" is an impressive building that reflects Broadway's period of social prominence during the years 1900 - 1930. In each of the ten rooms, there is a fireplace. In the bedrooms the mantles are wooden to match the marble on the first floor. Other notable characteristics are the wood paneling below the windows and the wide floor boards of the attic and second floor.

This is federal style clapboard structure. It has a wood frame with interlocking joints. Between the studs, there are bricks, floor to roof.

## FOOTNOTES

1. The State and National Registers of Historic Places. 1981.
2. Criteria for Recognition as a "Designated Local Landmark", Amityville Historical Society.
3. The First Methodist Episcopal Church of Amityville - Its History, Organization and Membership, pp. 8-9.
4. Amityville Record, May 6, 1965.
5. Interview with Seth Purdy, March 23, 1987.
6. Although in the Amityville Record, January 9, 1969, Tredwell is spelled "Tredwell", in Ketcham Geneology, edited by Mary E. Ketcham, the name is recorded as "Tredwell". In this paper, in all subsequent references to Mr. T. Ketcham, the name will be spelled "Tredwell".
7. Long Island Sun, December 29, 1923.
8. Interview with Seth Purdy, March 23, 1987.
9. Marilyn David, Amityville Historic Site Survey Report (New York).
10. Interview with Ethel R. MacGill, March 21, 1987.

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Amityville Record. "Two More Business Firms Join 'Housekeeping' Trend." January 9, 1969.

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Farmingdale Post. "The Bennett House." January 16, 1925.

Long Island Sun. "Village Historian C.L.C. Ditmars Duscusses Amityville Homesteads." December 29, 1923.

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The State and National Registers of Historic Places. 1981

MAPS, SALES RECORDS, DEEDS AND INDENTURES:

Maps of Amityville: 1858, 1873, 1902, 1915. Lauder Museum, Amityville, N.Y.

Sales Records of 50, 64, 74, 77, 80 Broadway. Amityville Village Hall.

Deeds and Indentures of 64 Broadway. Riverhead, N.Y.

INTERVIEWS:

Gordon Moore, Village Clerk, March 2, 3, 1987.

Seth Purdy, Curator of the Lauder Museum. March 23, 1987.

Ethel R. MacGill, Former President of the Amityville Historical Society. March 21, 1987.

# IV. AMITYVILLE AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY:

# A LOOK AT THE GRAND OLD HOTELS

Karen Galazin

Around the turn of the century, Amityville was considered to be one of the chief resort towns on Long Island. People from as far away as Boston and Washington D.C. flocked to Amityville to "summer" in this charming town. Between the months of May through September, tourists sunbathed on Amityville's beautiful beaches; enjoyed the cool sea breezes; and simply browsed through the quaint town. It was a truly delightful "tourist town" that hibernated during the dark winter, but came to life, sparkling fresh, in the summer.

To study all aspects of Amityville during this time period would be an immensely overwhelming job. I have, instead, focused on the three main hotels - the Narragansett Inn, the Hotel New Point, and the Hathaway Inn - that catered to the tourists in such a grand style that it earned Amityville the coveted reputation of being "...thoroughly attractive...the center of a most delightful social circle each season". (1) These three hotels were crucial to Amityville's success as a resort, for the town depended on them to attract tourists who would be the major source of revenue during these months. Amityville could not afford to have even one hotel falter. However, the beautiful views, luxurious rooms, and modern facilities that were offered by each hotel proved so inviting to people looking to relax that the hotels - and the town - thrived during the summer.

The early twentieth century was a fascinating time in Amityville's history. It was an era in which "high society" considered Amityville a sunny haven in which one could relax in one of the most luxurious hotels on the Island. For when the hotels were running, they marked a period in our town's history that was rich with opulence and grandeur; but left in its wake only memories of an era past. It is one, however, that should be remembered.

Amityville was widely known during the turn of the century as a resort area "...similar to what the Hamptons are today". (2) What was its particular charm that made it so popular? Besides its beautiful beaches and hotels, its proximity to New York City was a key factor in its success. Women, children and Nannies usually summered in one of the three hotels while Daddy would travel by train from his office in the city on the week-ends. On Friday afternoons, the train station would be crowded with carriages containing families eargerly awaiting "Daddy's weekly visit". On Sundays, the men would simply board the train again to return to their jobs in the city. "At one time it was a thrilling sight to see the gay carriages traveling from the New Point, Hathaway, and Narragansett Inns, to the station..." (3) Amityville was an easily accessible town that allowed convenient travel to and from the city. This was a critical asset since cars were not yet widely used, and trains proved to be the main source of transportation used by families on vacation.

However, much of Amityville's popularity was due to the Long Island Railroad, not only for its easy access to the trains, but for its advertising. The L.I.R.R., which published travel guides for its patrons, would frequently list Amityville as one of Long Island's brightest attractions. The Long Island Illustrated, published by the Long Island Railroad Company, described Amityville as:

> ...a thrifty, progressive town, full of push and energy, and abreast with all the modernisms usually found in a place of its population, which is about three thousand... Amityville has electric lights and gas, and its streets are well graded and beautified by overhanging trees. It is one of the chief resorts on Long Island, and deserves its signal success in this line, for it has all the features desirable...it is always delightfully cool in the summer, as is such that it has the benefit of direct ocean breezes. All of these advantages have resulted in making this section exceedingly popular... (4)

Similarly, Long Island Resorts included Amityville in its guide for its summer tourists. It recommended Amityville as a refreshing change from the oppressive city heat:

> Following the shore line from Jamaica...one will find a succession of pretty little towns, villages and resorts, which offer special advantages because of their proximity to the city, and at the same time there is about them the very dedicated charm which belongs to country life. Among these is ...Amityville... (which abounds) in pleasant walks and drives near the water. (5)

Amityville Past and Present, written in 1933, remembers the town as "...a summer resort, facing the Great South Bay. It (offered) boating, fishing and bathing". (6) Obviously, the charms of a small town that was both near the city and on the Great South Bay, yet remained remarkably unspoiled, was alluring to not only tourists, but to advertisers as well. They made full use of Amityville's charm in order to bring more business to Long Island itself. However, since Amityville could only profit from the advertising, the town was more than willing to lend its popular name to Long Island advertisements.

One advertisement listed Amityville's attractions as the usual sea breezes, access to city and small-town charm. However, in an effort to attract even more tourists, the advertisement pointed out that Amityville was quite a healthy place to visit, for it was "...free from malarial influences". (7) I suppose in the early 1900's this was an impressive trait - after all, one wouldn't dare summer in a place fraught with "malarial influences".

Guests enjoyed Amityville's serene splendor for many summers. However, it was the grand hotels in which they stayed that enticed them to return, for the hotels perpetuated the beautiful, exclusive image Amityville was known for. And so we will now examine the Hathaway Inn, the Hotel New Point, and the Narragansett Inn.

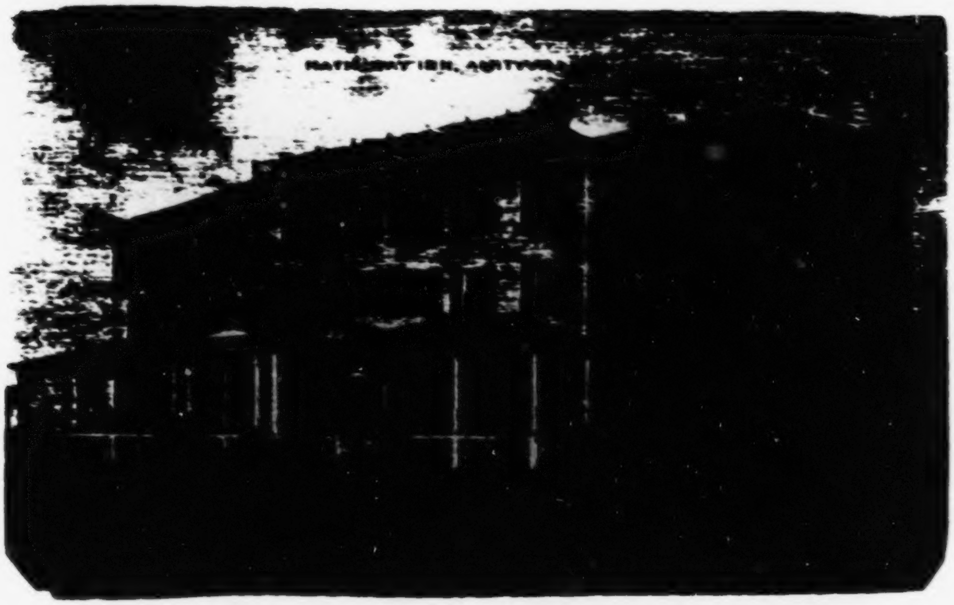
The Hathaway Inn was a breathtaking sight. Its quiet beauty emitted a classic charm; its colonial style was enhanced by its spacious windows and grounds. Tourists flocked to the graceful Inn, which boasted "60 rooms at $15.00 - $25.00 per week". (8)

The Hathaway was opened sometime in the late nineteenth century by a Mr. Ewen Hathaway, who also owned the Hotel New Point until (approximately) 1902. Its season ran from May first through early October. Only one and one-half miles from the station, and yet situated directly on the Bay, the hotel gained sudden popularity.

The Inn is advertised by its manager, Mr. Woodhead, as such:

> A garage is at the disposal of our patrons. The climate of this particular section of Long Island is charming. Suffolk, in which

county the Inn is located, is the second most healthful in the United States. The temperature is...cooler than New York City. The wearied find in the invigorating atmosphere "a rest which is real". (9)



The Hathaway Inn

The advertisement also listed amusements such as "fishing, boating, still water and surf bathing, Golf, Tennis and Riding Academy nearby".

Despite its spacious exterior and luxurious rooms, the Hathaway seems to have been less popular than the Hotel New Point. The Long Island Illustrated reported that the "Hathaway Inn is...not very widely patronized". In contrast, it reported that the Hotel New Point was the "center of a most delightful social circle..." (10) One can easily detect the differences in reviews, which leads one to believe that the New Point was a bit more popular, and hence, more profitable.

Odly then, when Mr. Hathaway was forced to sell one of the hotels, he chose to keep the Hathaway. An excerpt of a letter written in the early 1900's relates that:

> Mr. Hathaway gave up the Hotel but continued to run the Inn...After he gave up the hotel a group from New York...rented the Hotel and ran it for one season... (11)

One can only speculate about his reasons for keeping the Inn. Perhaps it was because the Inn was his namesake, and thus more important he felt, than profit. At any rate, it's popularity steadily decreased in the '20's and '30's, until it remained boarded up year round. Finally, (no exact date found) a fire completely destroyed the Hathaway. Soon after the Inn was burned down, houses were built on its property, as there was much demand for houses on the waterfront. Today, it is a residential area with no trace of the Inn that once graced it.

The Hotel New Point

The Hotel New Point was situated directly across from the Hathaway, on the east side of Grand Central Avenue. Its exact date of construction is unknown, but it is recorded that "The New Point Hotel was built before we arrived (1900)".

Its magnificent architecture truly earned it the reputation of being the "Handsomest Hotel on the Great South Bay". (11) Its luxury was unbounded; an examination of the July 5th, 1909 menu shows that the Hotel tried to cater to its guests' cultured palates. The dinner menu boasted:

Fish: Boiled Kennebec Salmon and Cardinal Pommes Dewey
Releve: Boiled Vermont Turkey a la Steuben
Entrees: Sweetbread Glace, St. Cloud, Filet Mignon, Cheron,
Queen Fritters au Vanilla
Roast: Prime Ribs of Beef au Jus (13)

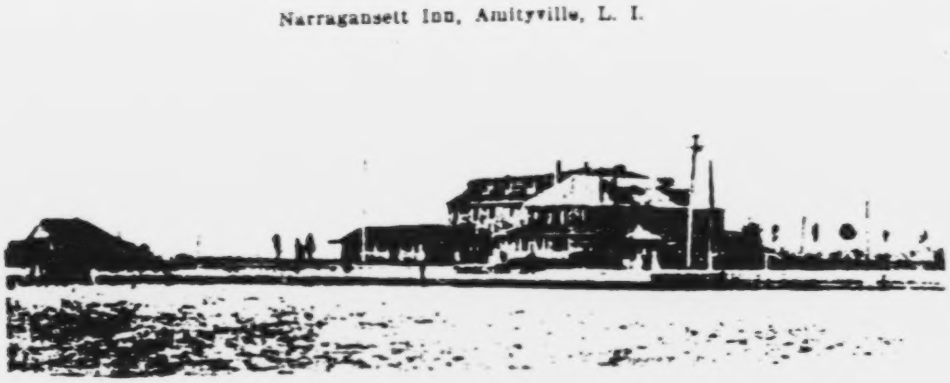
A wide variety of relishes, soups, vegetables, and desserts were also available. Certainly, this is a rather large menu that serves to evidence the New Point's grand style; and at the same time, indicates the quality of service its guests expected to receive. Furthermore, the menu points out that, while dinner is served between 6:30 and 8:00, "nannies and children will eat from 6:00 - 7:30 PM".

The Hotel consisted of 60 rooms, with variable terms per week. It "...enjoyed a steady clientele and (was) usually filled up from July 1st to Labor Day". (14) Similarly, Long Island Resorts reported that "Amityville on the Great South Bay (has) good hotels...the New Point Hotel (is one)".

The New Point enjoyed its greatest popularity from the turn of the century through the 1920's. However, with its decreasing clientele, it was made into the "South Shore Holiday House where Fresh Air Children from New York City (were) brought for a two week's vacation". (15) This philanthropic enterprise was successful until 1944, when a great fire ravaged through the hotel:

> Discovered by chance, Chemical Hose Company put (the fire) out without much trouble...Had the Holiday House actually gained headway, Amityville would have had its all-time fire fighting job. (16)

Sadly, the fire was enough to eradicate the grand hotel that was once celebrated by the elite as the most elegant hotel on Long Island.


Narragansett Inn, Amityville, L. I.

The Narrangansett Inn

Comparatively little is known about the Narragansett Inn. Located at the foot of Ocean Avenue, it was a stone's throw away from its neighbors, the Hotel New Point and the Hathaway Inn. Established around the turn of the century, it was considered a "summer weekend retreat from the city heat, near the bay". (17)

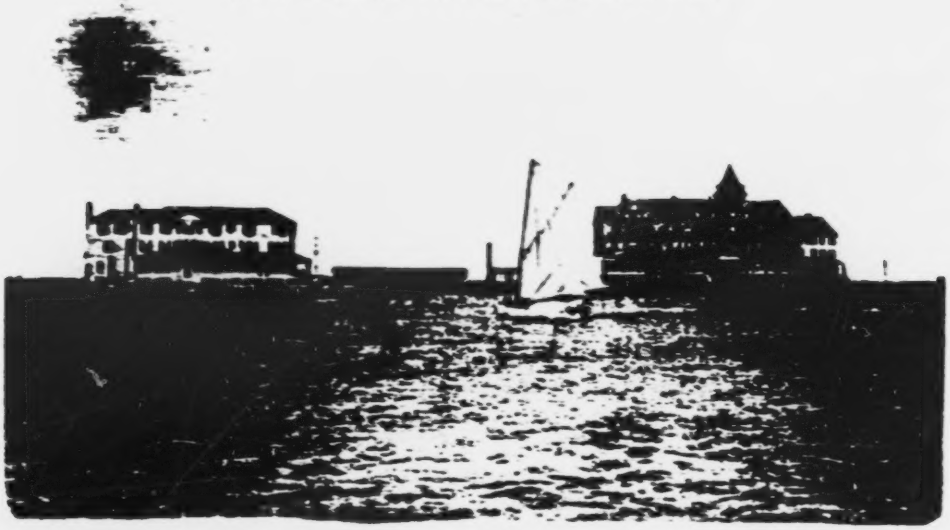
The Inn's registry from 1919 - 1925 lists Carl Fuchs and his family as managers. Much like today, the Inn warns that "All money, jewels, coats, valises and other valuables must be left at the office, and checks received for them, otherwise the Proprietor will not be responsible for any loss". (18)

Guests visited from as far away as Boston, Washington D.C., and even Honolulu. A group of about 20 men, known as "The Beethoven Bachelors of New York" frequented the Inn in June of both 1920 and 1921. Most guests spent June through August at the Inn.

One can only assume that the Narragansett enjoyed a profitable livelihood, for it flourished longer than the other two hotels. Unfortunately, not much information can be found regarding the Inn. In 1962, however, the Amityville Fire Department was called to put out a fire in the Inn. Although they stopped it from spreading, they were too late to salvage the Inn itself. Once again, a tribute to Amityville's gracious and elegant past was destroyed by fire.

The Hathaway Inn, Hotel New Point, and Narragansett Inn stood as tributes to Amityville's period of being an exclusive resort town. What caused their eventual demise? Before cars became widely available, people stayed in one spot for the entire summer. However, when cars became popular, people began to lose interest in Amityville's hotels; they wanted to travel widely during the summer months:

> With the coming of the machine age travel was made easier. One could go much farther for a summer vacation or trip into the country. This brought about a change in the popularity of the hotels... (19)



The Hathaway and the Hotel New Point

It has been most interesting to discover Amityville's colorful past through researching the old hotels. It is truly regrettable that none of them still stand, for they were an intricate aspect of our town's history.

## FOOTNOTES

1. Howard M. Smith, Long Island Illustrated, 1902, (New York, 1902), p. 25
2. Interview with Mr. Purdy at the Historical Society, February 17, 1987
3. Edna B. Greeny, Amityville Past and Present, Educational Sociology Course, 1933, p. 8
4. Smith, p. 24
5. Long Island Resorts (author and date unknown) pp. 22-23
6. Greeny, p. 8
7. Smith, p. 25
8. Long Island Resorts, pp. 22-23
9. George F. Sweeney, Long Island: The Land of the "Sunrise Trails", (New York, 1926), p. 161
10. Smith, p. 24
11. Letter written by Louis Beer, Historical Society scrapbook

12. Smith, p. 24

13. Menu from New Point, "A Glorious Fourth", Amityville Historical Society

14. Letter by Louis Beer

15. Greeny, p. 8

16. Scrapbook, Amityville Historical Society

17. Seth Purdy, Jr., and Elodie Dibbins, Amityville Remembered: A Pictorial History 1880-1920 (New York, 1986), p. 35.

18. Narragansett Inn Guests Registry, 1919-1921, Amityville Historical Society

19. Greeny, p. 8

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All pictures from Amityville Remembered: A Pictorial History 1880-1920 by Seth Purdy, Jr. and Elodie Dibbins

# V. THE CHANGE IN ARCHITECTURE IN AMITYVILLE FROM COLONIAL TO BUNGALOW

Jack A. Bade

## Introduction

When you think of the word "style", most likely many things come to mind. One could be the "well-dressed man", or perhaps a certain manner or way of speech. The way an artist expresses himself is through music, dance, painting, etc. Like the aforementioned, architecture has style as well. The way the architect expresses himself is like an art, but instead of using sound, movement or canvas, the architect employs brick and mortar. Not only does the architecture say a lot about what the architect would like to express, it reflects the public's preference during a particular period.

Large scale building on Long Island has ended. The Island is full of original structures with additions that mix and match styles. But then that brings us to the meaning of style - what is style?

If you wanted the same style house as your neighbor, you would be living in Levittown. If you wanted something more unique, it could be found in an older community. Whether new or old, each structure has a certain style. The characteristics of that style seem to define themselves as newer styles arise.

Amityville is a community which has the benefit of a long history. Over the generations many structures have been built and the full spectrum of architectural styles is represented in our community. Various outstanding examples are discussed within.

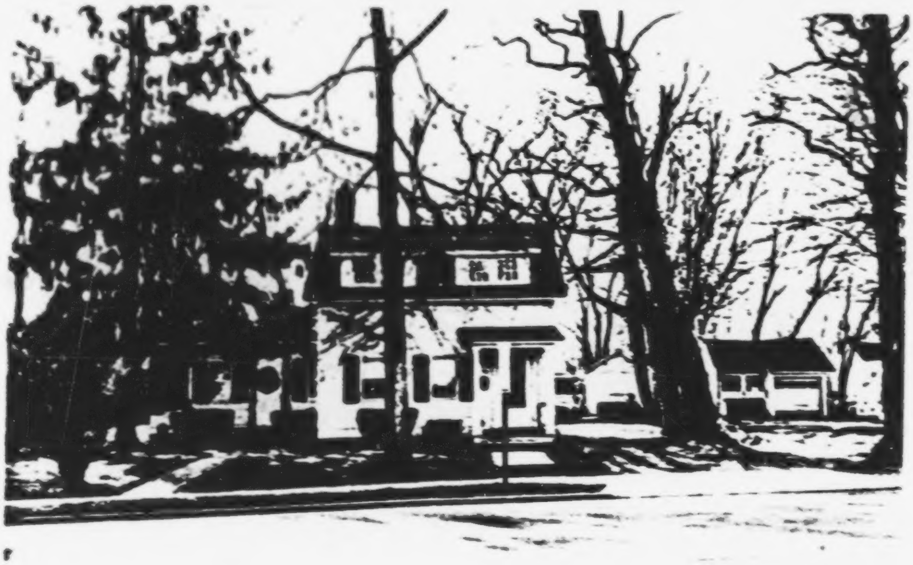
## Background on Styles

### Early Colonial

Few structures remain from the first English settlements on the East Coast. Those that do exist exhibit regional variations. Colonial buildings in North

America reflect styles that were developed during the reigns of Elizabeth the First (1558 to 1603) and James the First (1603 to 1625). These styles included steep pitched roofs and ornamental symmetry. They had tall massive chimneys and small casement windows. Buildings were usually constructed with a combination of building materials such as clapboard for the siding, brick for the foundation and chimney, and leaded muntins to divide the wavey bubbled glass in the casements.

Only a few examples of colonial architecture exist in Amityville today. The structure exhibited above is the oldest building in Amityville which is still situated on its original site. The building reflects several "classical" colonial characteristics. Notice the steep pitched roof and ornamental symmetry of the porch posts and post brackets. The six windows on the first floor are neatly grouped in twos and separated by matching doors and shutters. The three dormers are placed midpoint between each set of first floor windows. The dormers have pitched roofs complementing the main roof. Each of the dormers have casement windows which swing out from the frame. The entire house is marked by a conscientious symmetry so indicative of the period.



In the second example above, the dormers were added, as well as the extension to the south. Yet, you can still see the steep pitched roof and box-like symmetry that was prevalent during the Colonial period. This last home is one of the oldest structures in Amityville and possesses the same qualities as the other example such as pitched roofs, tall brick chimneys and the small windows with the leaded casements.

### Georgian

Although certain architectural books extend the Georgian period in American architecture (the end of the reign of George the Fourth), most now agree that the period ended about 1700. The Georgian style exhibits several hallmarks regarding rigid symmetry, axle entrances, geometric proportions, pitched roofs and sash windows. The Georgian style reflected renaissance ideals made popular in England by architect Sir Christopher Wren. Wren came to America and introduced this style at William & Mary College. Many of his designs still survive today.

The lack of construction during the Revolutionary War which caused a shortage of raw materials, ended the Georgian period of architecture in America, although conservative builders continued to use the style until the 19th Century.

Many Georgian buildings along the Eastern Seaboard served as homes of the founders of the nation and were the sites of historical events of the Revolutionary War. It was no surprise then, that after 75 years of revising European styles, late 19th Century American architects inspired by post-centennial zeal again began to look to their own national past for appropriate models. Although the Georgian revival structure enjoyed its gretest acceptance and most vigorous expression in the late 19th Century and the early 20th Century, the style is still popular today.

Unfortunately, most new construction lacks the true elements of the Georgian style. Pictured above is an outstanding example of Georgian Revival. Although this Georgian-style home has had many revisions, the roots of its past stand out. The entrance motif is composed of a fanlight window and half columns, which is designed to bring the focus toward the entrance. The hipped roofs are intended to bring out the symmetrical nature of the house as well as matching extension and central captain's walk. The tall brick chimney, sash windows, roof hand-rails and clapboard siding are all classical features of this period.

## Federal

In 1776 a new style created in Scotland by the Adams Brothers had overcome the Georgian style in popularity. Although this style mimicked many of the stylistic elements of its predecessor, it incorporated several new and prominent changes. Those changes were influenced by Adams' interest in Roman and Renaissance architecture, and reflected the use of decorative patterns of urns, swags, sheets and other garlands which were found in many of the houses of early Rome.

Although the Revolutionary War ended British reign over the 13 colonies, it did not end the influence of British architectural styles. The Adams style as found in the United States, is known as the Federal style because it flowered in the early decades of the new nation. Federal style buildings are found throughout the cities and towns of the Eastern Seaboards and particularly in seaport areas like Amityville.

Other trademarks of the style are a square or rectangular brick which was usually frame, three stories high. The frame was often topped with low pitched roofs and pediments above the exterior. Door and window openings were beautifully scaled and articulated frequently with fan and oval forms. Columns and mouldings were narrow and delicate as compared with the more robust features of the Georgian style. In general, the frame was squared and exterior decorations confined to porch or entrance motif. Interiors differed noticeably from earlier architectural styles. Some rooms were oval, circular or octangular rather than angular. Mantels, foors and windows, frames and ceilings were decorated with delicate rosettes, urns and oval patterns. The squareness which is present in both exterior styles is self-evident. As in most Federal homes, there is a fan window at the entrance. Like many homes in Amityville, these have extensions which are not indicative of the period. The photos exhibit such Federal characteristics as pitched roofs, sash windows, prominent entrance motif and shutter to balance.

## Stick Style

Evolving out of the carpenter's gothic, the Stick style flourished in the mid-19th Century. This style of wood construction is characterized by steep and symmetrical roofs, with a post of steep intersecting gables. Verandas and porches were common and often decorated with simple diagonal braces. In keeping with the idea set by many architects past and present "that architecture should be truthful", the principal characteristic of the Stick style was the expression of the inner structure of the house through the plain exterior ornaments. Most often on gable ends and upper stories, the Stick style work was usually a series of boards intersecting at right angles and applied over the clapboard to symbolize the skeleton. Sometimes diagonal boards were incorporated to resemble half timbering.

The porch posts are simple and reflect their basic support of the roof. The house is constructed with horizontal clapboard. No ornamentation adorns this house. Stick was meant to be a "truthful" expression of the inner structure. Other prominent elements include intersecting gables, sash windows, and partial wall blocking the porch floor instead of ornamental balastrades.

## Queen Anne

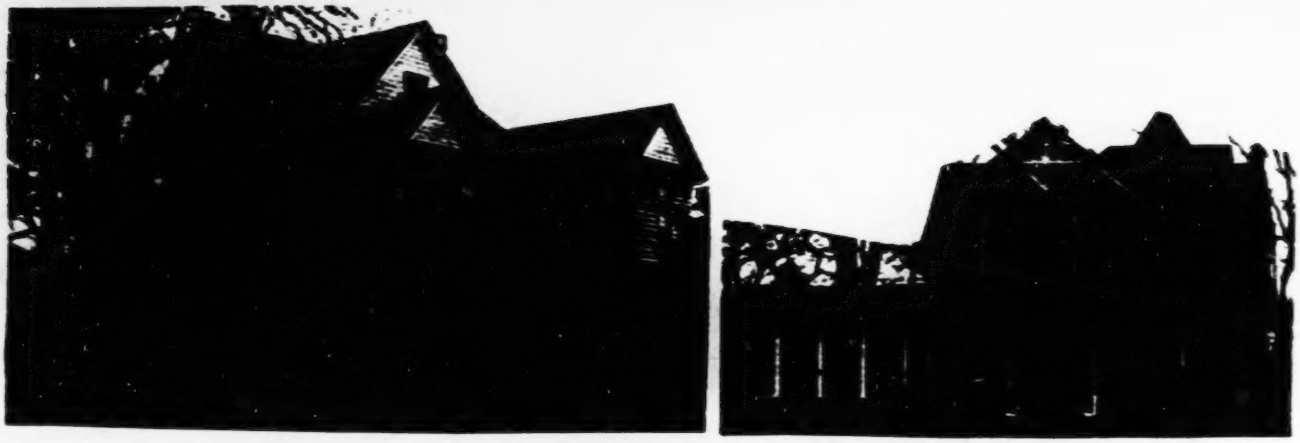
Just the name of this style suggests where its origins lie. The name was coined in England to describe buildings that were supposedly inspired by the traditional architecture of the pre-Georgian period when classical ornament was put onto the buildings. The English architect most closely associated with the Queen Anne style was Richard Norman Shaw (1833 to 1912). His name is most well known on the American architectural scene. The Queen Anne style was based on a contrast of materials. First floors were often brick or stone; upper stories were stucco, clapboard or decorative shingles, which were frequently used in the United States in the place of the tiles popular in England. Huge medieval-type chimneys were common. Roofs were gabled or hipped, often with second story projections and corner turrets borrowed from French chateaus. Moulded or special shaped bricks were used as decorative accents. Casement windows were common, and upper window panes, which were often outlined with stained glass squares. The contemporary "colonial" lifestyle called for verandas and balconies which opened their houses to the outdoors.

The first true American Queen Ann building is architects H. H. Richardson's and William Watts Sherman House (1874) in Newport, Rhode Island. The Queen Anne style was employed to its best advantage in free-standing residences.

In this first example of a Queen Anne style, the hipped roofs and the windows, which are casement, are present. The open porch, which most Victorian houses have, is decorated with brackets and bottom rails. The clapboard and fan-like design is also another sign of the Queen Anne Victorian style home.

The next home, which is similar to the other house, possesses some new additions, such as the porch which wraps around the house and the clapboard which is used in almost every home at this time.

The last home is yet another subdivision in Queen Anne style. This is an Eastlake Queen Anne. Again you can spot another addition to the house. The left portion has been added. This Eastlake has a turret which the other houses did not have. The turret or tower was very important in "true" Queen Anne of this period.



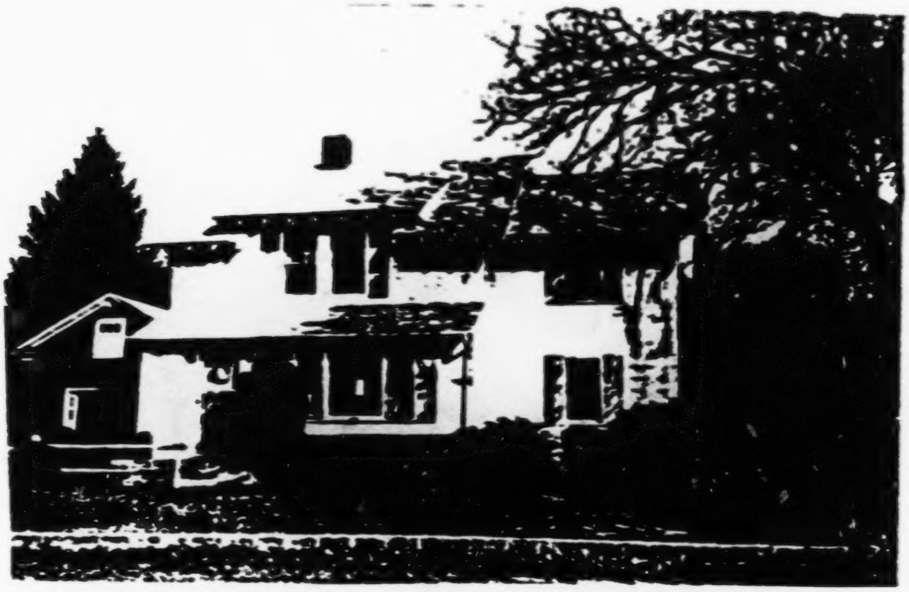
Bungalow

At first glance, this house might not look like it should be classified as a Bungalow. But under the addition and with the asbestos shingles which ruined the original siding, you will notice the roof which has the wide overhang showing the rafters. I am sure that when this house was first built, it had a stucco or siding which fit the time period. This is a true example of a Bungalow style house. Again, you can probably notice the wide overhang which exposed the rafters. The original stucco siding is also present.

Now that you know the origins of the styles, you should know how they affect our town of Amityville. Some of these styles, as they are found in Amityville today, were not built at the time when they were most prevalent. Most people think that this means that the homes or structures were not "true" to the style. This is not correct. The characteristics of a style can be filled at any time and still be considered to be a "true" style. Of course, when the early Colonial period started in the 17th Century, the village of Amityville was not in existence. This is my point: There are many early Colonials in Amityville which are considered to be of true style. When you look at the architecture in Amityville you notice considerable diversity. This is due to the fact that most areas of Amityville and, on all of Long Island, were used mostly for summer residences. This caused two things to happen. One was that the first houses that were built were not always sturdy structures. The other was the rapid change in houses and structures. The Island became a popular place to live. This created a demand for housing. As for Amityville, most of its southern portion was wetlands. This made it difficult to build on. But after hard work the wonderful homes became a reality.

The old families in Amityville own most of the land and built most of the larger homes. But after time passed and more people had a longing to move to our village, the large plots were split up. This caused a common sight in Amityville - a Queen Anne next door to a Split Level Ranch. This is what has caused a loss of diversity in Amityville architecture.

The time period which I have dealt with, early Colonial to Bungalow, starts off with little to no change, then goes to large changes. For example, if you compare Early Colonial to Federal or Georgian to Stick style, you notice very little change, if any. But if you compare Queen Anne or Federal to Bungalow, you notice large differences. In these photos of a Federal and Georgian home many of the same features exist in both houses. Then look at the photos of a Stick style as opposed to a Bungalow style. They don't look like they even



belong on the same block. That is why this is a good time period to investigate - slow change that leads to rapid change.

Today real estate prices are skyrocketing with respect to waterfront property. People are changing homes and purchasing "handyman specials". The change in locale is good for the village, because it not only restores homes to the original splendor, but it takes the focus off the overpriced watefront homes and shifts it to the once-forgotten homes that originally were constructed in Amityville. A sense of historic consciousness remains alive through the architectural remodeling in late twentieth century Amityville.

Before

After

## VI. THE FORMATIVE YEARS: A HISTORY OF THE AMITYVILLE SCHOOLS

## (1840 - 1906)

Jennifer Galazin

A typical child of the Amityville School District in 1987 follows a well established path throughout the public school system. As a child of three or four years of age, he attends Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten in the Northeast School. He then advances to first and then second grade in Northwest. The third, fourth, and fifth grades are taught in two of the three Park Avenue Schools. The Junior High School teaches grades six through nine, and the High School teaches ten through twelve. This "chain" appears to the student to be age-old. However, most of these schools weren't built until well into the twentieth century. In fact, Park North is the only school that was built in the 1800's that is still used today. It is fascinating to look into the early years of this school system and to learn how it was established. Hopefully, this paper will give not only the students of the district, but also the adults of the district, an understanding of why and how the Amityville School District began.

### What's In a Name

Amityville was originally known as Huntington (West Neck) South. Some time after 1840, the people of the community felt that a new name should be given; after all, "'Huntington South' designated a much larger area than that bound by School District No. 23, the only political sub-division of the area". (1) The citizens of Huntington South believed, and rightly so, that their town should have its own identity, especially since it had its own school district.

Around this time, the people of Huntington South were aware of a possibility of their own Post Office. "Residents (had) received their mail through the South Oyster Bay Post Office,...a short distance west of (the community)." (2) Now, since a Post Office was in the near future, the residents of Huntington South decided to re-name the community.

As expected, there is no clear-cut answer as to how the name "Amityville" was chosen. One legend has it that a woman at a meeting to pick a name said that there should be more "amity" among those attending, since a fervent debate was taking place. (3)

Another story contends that the abundance of Quakers in the area (the Society of Friends) may have been the influence for the name. (4)

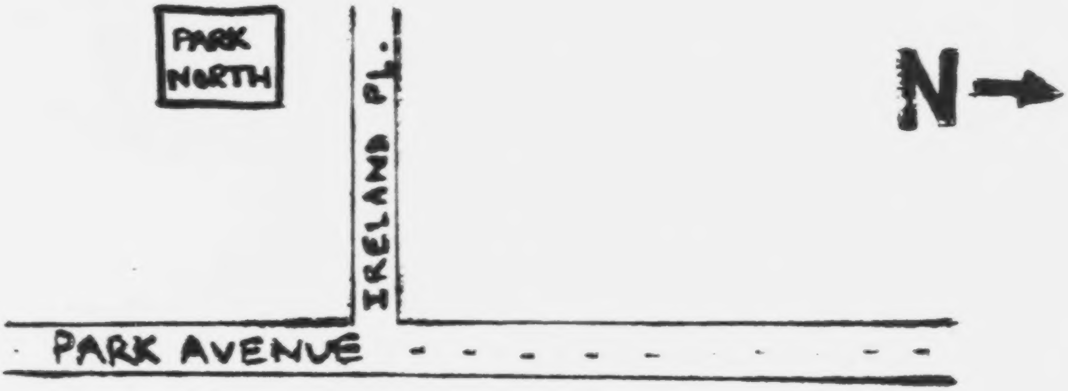
The legend that is most feasible involves Samuel Ireland, a highly respected citizen. He suggested that the town be named after his boat, the "Amity". This name was accepted since the meeting was running late. (5) The earliest school record using the name "Amityville" is from January 1, 1847. The Amityville Post Office was established on April 15, 1850. This new name and the Post Office for the village gave its residents the pride and the drive to build the Amityville School District into a respected institution.

### In the Beginning...

The first school building was located on the north side of South Country Road, also known as South Turnpike, west of Broadway. It is difficult to say for certain what year this school was established, but it was definitely in use by 1840. It quite possibly may have been in use before 1832. (6)

At any rate, this school was replaced in 1854 by a new building. This new school cost the district all of $868.00. It was not located where the previous school was; this one was closer to the Triangle than to South Country Road. (7) This school was built because the population of the school district was getting too high to house all the students in the South Turnpike school.

Another increase of population necessitated the construction of a new school in 1872, this one located where the Park North building is today. This is the earliest school that is still standing today. It was moved to Broadway and is now located next to the Lauder Museum.



What we now call "Park North" was constructed in 1894. This was the first brick building of the district. The Brooklyn Times on August 8, 1894, and the Signal, June 1, 1895, praised the beauty and splendor of the new school. But, of course, the district's population continued to increase. In 1902, the district acquired a strip of land in Nassau County. This, plus the population increase, forced the district to take new measures. In 1904, the Board of Education decided that teacher Miss Alice Penny would instruct the youngest children in Saint Mary's Episcopal church's Parish House. A year later, this was not sufficient.

A special Board meeting was called on June 23, 1905. This did not interest the residents of Amityville -- only 37 voters showed up. Still, the great majority of them (82%) agreed to a $6,000 frame extension to Park North. Curiously, this extension was never built.

Another meeting was called on September 25 by Dr. John F. Louden, a prominent member of the Board. He proposed to add an additional $9000 to the budget. This would allow the district to build a brick extension instead of the originally planned frame wing. "No vote was taken, and the meeting was adjourned. Meanwhile, nobody had submitted a bid to build the $6000 building originally approved, and 57 pupils were jamming the Parish House annex." (8)

On October 30, 262 voters appeared at the Board meeting. This was a clear indication that the residents of the Amityville School District were finally taking an interest in their school system. At this meeting, the frame wing was favored over the brick wing by 23 votes. However, the lowest bid was $7,600 by Milford H. Ketcham.

The Board of Education was fed up with the whole situation. On February 5, 1906, the Board "voted to submit a proposal to build an eight-room brick annex on the west side of the existing building at a cost of $20,000." (9) If overcrowding continued, state aid could be denied.

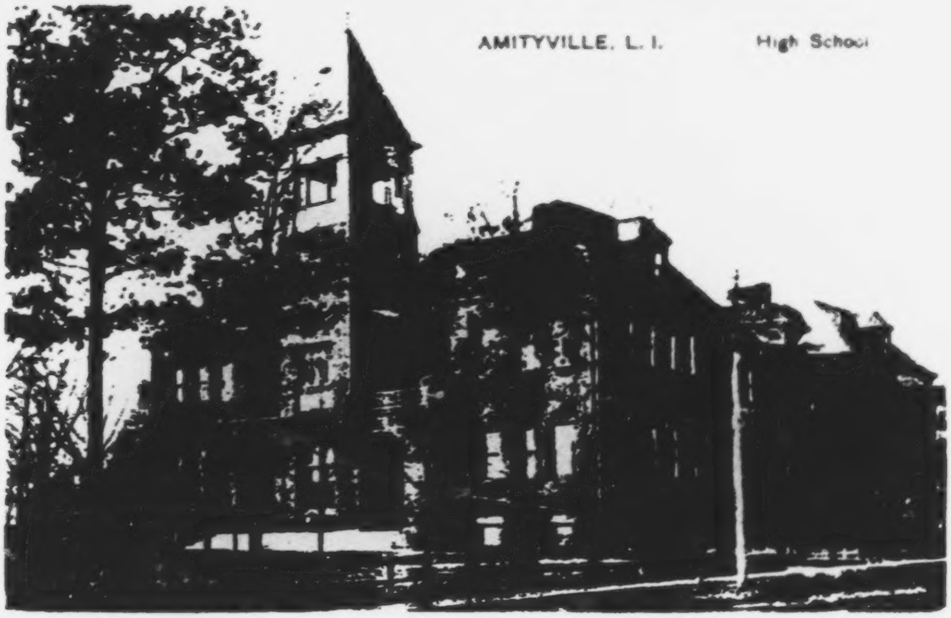
A ballot was presented on March 31. It gave three choices:

1. to rescind the $6,000 plan
2. requested the $15,000 wood building
3. requested a $24,000 brick building

The brick building won, but the bids were too high. Milford H. Ketcham's bid of $20,895 was agreed upon by the Board and on August 23, 1906, he was awarded the contract.

A special roof was needed that would require an additional $6,000. This price also included the installation of indoor toilets. A weary nine voters appeared to approve the $13,755 budget for the following year.

(NOTE: A fire on April 20, 1956, destroyed the wing.)



AMITYVILLE HIGH SCHOOL
Erected 1894
West wing added 1907

## The Amityville Union Free School District No. 6

The new town of Babylon was established in 1872. The eight school districts were renumbered; Common School District No. 23 became Common School District No. 6.

The Amityville School District had, as has been stated, serious problems in the construction and planning of its schools. Five buildings had been built in about 60 years. As a result, a special group was established in 1892 to set down the building needs of the district, and what would be the best ways to fulfill these needs. They recommended on August 2, 1892:

> that steps be taken at an early day to change our district to a Union Free School district -- thus permitting the period of payment of indebtedness for the erection of a new school building to be so extended as to secure a lower rate of taxation, as well as putting our district into a position to derive other very important advantages not to be obtained otherwise. (10)

Thus, the district became Union Free.

## Segregation in Amityville

It is a little known fact that black schools existed in Amityville in 1895. These schools were located on the east side of Albany Avenue, North of the railroad depot. The first one was established by 1845, and possibly even in 1839. The blacks of the community lived around there, the area that is now included in North Amityville.

As the district expanded in the late 19th century, the black school continued to operate. The teacher, Titus Jackson, was born in Brooklyn, New York. He was the first teacher, and probably the one who served the longest.

A new building was constructed on the same site in 1874 to accommodate the increasing number of black students. In 1895, the black school was abolished. "The opening of the new brick school (Park North) in Amityville in 1895 marked the end of the Black school since the Black parents preferred to have their children make the long walk to this modern facility." (11) This is perfectly understandable -- the black school had shoddy and "old-fashioned" facilities.

Eleven black students attended the once "white school". This increased the over-crowding that already existed. Twenty-two citizens asked the following request of the Board:

> Gentlemen:
>
> We the undersigned legal voters in said district make application to have a special meeting called for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a separate school for colored children resident in said Union Free School District No. 6 of Amityville, Suffolk Co., NY. (12)

The Black school building site was sold by the district in 1901. The motion to re-open the black school was too late; the integrated school had been in session for four days before the vote was taken. If school had not begun yet, the black school may have still existed -- the vote was in favor of it.

## Conclusion

Throughout my research, I have come across many interesting, and even surprising facts about the Amityville School District. Many of them are contained in this paper; however, it would be impossible to include them all. My original intention was to write about the entire history of the school system; I soon found that this would make my paper extremely long. The sixty-six years written about in this paper include the establishment of a respectable school district from a tiny building on Merrick Road. I chose the years 1840 - 1906 because these are the years of foundation: The principles and traditions of the Amityville School District that are still present today were formed. In learning how and why they were formed, one can better appreciate the system that exists at the present time.

## FOOTNOTES

1. Joel R. Simon, Selected Topics in the History of Amityville... (1979) p.29

2. ibid, p.29

3. Huntington-Babylon Town History, p.262

4. ibid, p.262

5. Amityville Record, February 10, 1911, p.1

6. Joel R. Simon, Selected Topics in the History... (1979) p.112

7. ibid, p.112

8. Amityville Record, September 29, 1905, p.2

9. Amityville Record, January 12, 1906

10. Records of the School District No. 6

11. Joel R. Simon, Selected Topics in the History... (1979) p.213

12. Records of the School District No. 6, pp.85-88.

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## VII

# THE HISTORY OF THE AMITYVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Larry Korgood

Amityville is a small town located on the south shore of Long Island. It is the first town you hit coming into Suffolk County on the south shore. Amityville means friendly village and that is exactly what it is. The people of Amityville are friendly and the town is often referred to as the Friendly Bay Village.

Around the 1900's, Amityville found itself without the cultural and educational advantages that a library could provide. The only library service available was provided by the Sunday School Libraries located in St. Mary's Episcopal and Simpson Methodist churches. (1) The books that these churches provided were of a religious nature and provided a limited selection for the people of Amityville.

There was a rental library located in a local stationary store called Tabard Inn Books. The rental fee for the books was five cents per week, but the books were not appealing to everybody. (2)

Massapequa, a neighboring community of Amityville and smaller in size, did have a library. It was known as the Delany Floyd-Jones free library. This library still exists today but is not easily accessible to the public. It is mainly a reference library.

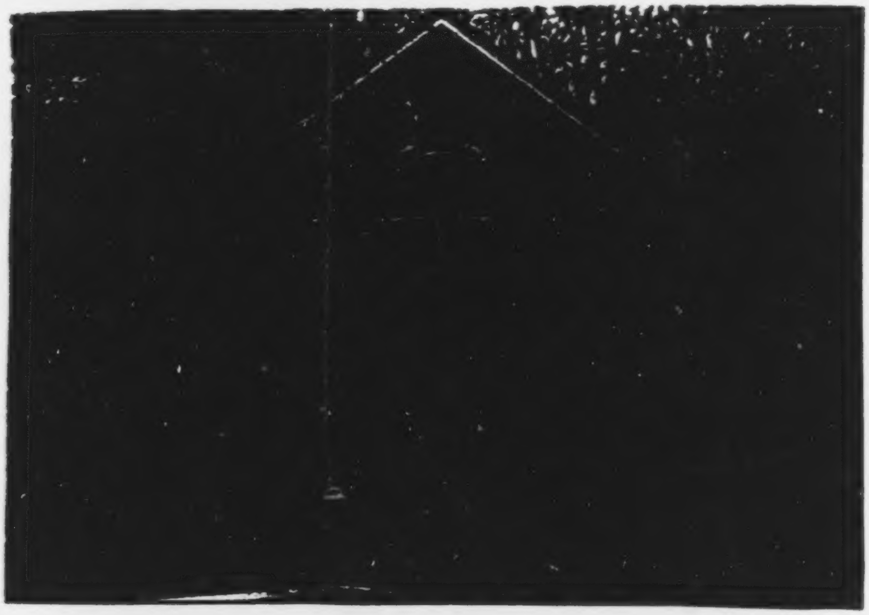
The Amityville Literary Society, started by the women of Amityville, was one group that saw the necessity for a library. The one woman who you could say is responsible for all this is Mary P. Myton. She opened her doors in February, 1904, and held a meeting to discuss and formulate plans for a literary society. On March 9, 1904, a club known as the Wednesday Afternoon Club was organized and later changed to the Amityville Literary Society. (3) One evening in 1907, the society held a book social at Mrs. Myton's house. They had sixty-seven books donated during this social. These books formed the basis of the library that exists today. (4)

The first home for the library books was at the house of Warren Purdy, who acted as the librarian. As the book stock grew, more room was needed, so Mr. Skinner went to the parish house at St. Mary's, where he secured a room for them. (5) Still more and more books came to the library and they needed another storage facility for the books.

A public meeting was held in the Lyceum on April 17, 1907, to organize the rules and regulations that the library would be run under. The people of the board came up with a constitution that they all agreed upon. After the constitution had been agreed upon, it was presented to the people of Amityville. At the first meeting of the board of trustees, the following people were voted to hold the various positions. Lots were drawn to determine their length of service in the library system.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| President | Mr. Skinner | 1 year |
| Vice President | Mrs. Myton | 3 years |
| Secretary | Mr. Inglee | 4 years |
| Treasurer | Mr. Baldwin | 2 years |
| Trustee | Mrs. Boylis | 5 years |

Through my research I found two conflicting facts. In A Backward Glance, an historical book about Amityville, it says that the people of the Literary Society had a door-to-door subscription drive to buy a small wooden building to be called the Amityville Free Library. In a dissertation by William Skerynek, it states that the first building was given to the literary society by the Bank of Amityville and a fee of one dollar was given to secure a bill of sale. I conducted a thorough investigation; I have not been able to clear up this discrepancy.



The Original Wood Library Building

On February 19, 1925, the wooden building that the literary society used as a library was replaced by a two story brick building with a basement for storage. To fund this library, the literary society had a door-to-door fundraising

The Old Brick Library on Broadway

drive to supply them with the money needed. The cost of the new library was about forty-one thousand dollars. (6) This building was adequate for quite a while.

The new library had extended its hours which gave people more opportunity to take out books. It was open every Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 2:30 to 5:30 and 7:00 to 9:30. People were given a two week period in which they would have to return the books that had been borrowed. To take out a book all one had to do was sign their name to the cover. This was a very poor way of keeping track of who had what books.

In 1932 the Amityville Free Library celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary. The library decided to put on a play to mark this joyous occasion. The library took care of all the necessities and managed to make a profit of sixty dollars. (7)

In 1934, Miss Helen Badger, the librarian, became seriously ill and soon died. (8) The trustees then hired Mrs. Homans to become the new librarian. She began on October 1, 1934, and was considered to be a valuable asset to the library. She helped increase the flow of people that used the library. She served until December 14, 1939. (9)

On July 9, 1935, Mr. Skinner retired as president of the library association, and Helmer Peterson took his place. (10) Mr. Peterson was a new member to the board of trustees. He was faced with many responsibilities which he dealt with in a brilliant manner. During his first year in office, the library budget became part of the school budget. This meant the library would receive money from the village ($1,500) and from the union free school district number 6 it would receive ($2,500). (11)

In 1939 Mrs. Homans resigned and Mrs. Marion Chichester took her place. She improved the library by developing an efficient system of borrowing books. During her time in the library system she helped to increase the circulation of the books. There were many other librarians that helped the library a lot. They include Doris Young, Hedda Woblebe, Ann Drayton and Catherine Fitz. Miss Fitz was the last librarian to work in the brick building on Broadway. (12)

The New Library on Oak Street

After World War II ended, the population of Amityville grew rapidly. As the population grew, the amount of books the library had also increased. The amount of books the library had was too much for the little brick building they were in. It had become time to expand and move to a larger building. The library decided that the new building would be publicly funded. It would function inside the school district and receive funds from the state to help operating expenses. They found a location on the corner of Oak Street and began construction. The new library opened its doors in 1972. (13)

The new building houses over 70,000 books for its 9000 members. This current status outnumbers the 2000 books for its 471 borrowers when it first opened. (14) The library is used by many students of the Amityville school system and people of neighboring villages for its resources. This library provides a place where people of Amityville can go and learn.

With help from the people and resources at the library, this paper was made possible.

## ENDNOTES

1. William Skerynek, The First Fifty Years: A History of the Amityville Free Library From 1907 - 1957, p.12.
2. "No Library, No Television, No Movies, No Automobiles", The Amityville Record, May 6, 1954, p.16.
3. William Skerynek, The First Fifty Years: A History of the Amityville Free Library From 1907 - 1957, p.13.
4. Ibid, p.16.
5. Ibid, p.17.
6. "Amityville Library Has 25th Birthday", Long Island Sun, Dec. 12, 1932, p.1.
7. Ibid, p.1.
8. William Skerynek, The First Fifty Years: A History of the Amityville Free Library From 1907 - 1957, p. 49.
9. Ibid, p.50.
10. Ibid, p.51-52.
11. Ibid, p.53.
12. "Amityville's Library", A Backwards Glance, Cecile H. Ruggles, p.68.
13. Ibid, p.68.
14. Ibid, p.68.

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"Amityville's Library", A Backwards Glance, Cecile H. Ruggles, 1980.

"Amityville Library has 25th Birthday", Long Island Sun, December 12, 1932.

"No Library, No Television, No Movies, No Automobiles", Amityville Record, May 6, 1954.

# VIII THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AMITYVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Peter Taddeo

Back in 1894, when the village of Amityville was incorporated, the village fathers decided they needed someone to keep authority. The village board of trustees, Charles Wood, George T. Homan, William Skinner, Willis B. Inglee, John Kortright, and Samuel P. Hildreth, appointed Charles Howenstein as constable for $15 a month. This officially started the Amityville Police Department.

The department didn't really get off the ground until 1904, when Edwin H. Stratton was appointed chief. He was assisted by Louis Ketcham and Adam Molle. One of the men patrolled during the day and the other two took the night shift. A bicycle was sometimes used during the night patrol, but most of the time the patrolling officers walked, patrolling the heart of town and checking the stores and bars. Public intoxication and vagrancy was the reason for most of the arrests.

The salary for the men was $50 a month. The officers received additional money for escorting prisoners to Riverhead. This was done if a prisoner was convicted of a crime punishable by a penalty of more than 30 days in jail. The prisoner was escorted to Riverhead in handcuffs on the Long Island Railroad. The officer received 20 cents for each mile. These bonuses were paid to the officers as an incentive to make good arrests.

Police headquarters was located on the second floor of the Triangle building from 1904 - 1924. The first floor of the building was occupied by the court and the village board meeting rooms. (1) The Triangle building is located in the center of the town. This made it very accessable, since most people walked or rode a bicycle. In the early years of the department, the local jail was located on West Oak Street and Burch Avenue. It consisted of two cells in a small brick building. The same two cells are in the present headquarters and still in use today. In 1924, the Municipal Building was built on Greene Avenue. This gave Amityville a modern police headquarters.

In the early 1900's, Merrick Road was a heavily traveled road with traffic from New York City. It was a dirt road with a 10 m.p.h. speed limit. On the weekends, the police chief, with the help of some residents, would set up a speed trap to catch cars speeding. Amityville became so notorious for this that a sign was erected on the Brooklyn Bridge saying, "Beware Amityville".

The salary of each patrolman by 1919 was $85 a month. Chief Stratton's salary was $100 a month. In 1920, Chief Stratton resigned after 16 years as chief. The department had grown to five men by this time. Barton F. Howe was next in line to oversee the police department.

A police booth was erected in the center of the village on Broadway and Greene Avenue in 1921. A patrolman was on duty 24 hours a day to answer telephone complaints as well as to operate the manual "stop" and "go" signs when traffic was heavy. The booth had direct telephone lines to the New York City and Nassau County Police departments. Because of this, the booth became a source of pride in Amityville.

The department purchased its first motorcycle in 1922 to patrol the village more readily. Also in 1922, the Police Blotter was initiated. During the first year of records, there were 424 requests for a patrolman, 729 arrests, 719 violations of Village Ordinances, 5 public intoxications, 2 driving while intoxicated, and 1 assault. (2)

In 1923, the village was busy running bazaars, holding raffles, and having bake sales in order to purchase an ambulance for village use. The ambulance, operated by a policeman, responded to accident and emergency calls in the village and adjoining communities. This service was supported by the village and didn't cost the patient or victim anything. It was maintained until 1942.

After five years as chief, Barton Howe resigned from the Amityville Police Department in 1925. With the help of the Ku Klux Klan, he became the Suffolk County Sheriff. Lieutenant William Klein took over as chief and held that position until he resigned in 1933. The new chief, Robert B. Fallot, decided that the eleven year old blotter wasn't enough of a record for arrests. He started a filing system where the arresting officer made out a card with information of the prisoner. This same system was employed in the New York City Police Department.

During the 1920's and 1930's, "rumrunners" smuggled liquor in through the Jones and Fire Island Inlets. If these smugglers got past the Coast Guard, they often tried to deliver the liquor in Amityville. The Amityville Police had to deal with them if they made it to the shores of Amityville.

By 1934, the department consisted of 11 men. In 1935, the department bought two 1935 Chevrolets equipped with one-way radios hooked up with the Nassau County Police Force. During this year the department received 3,004 telephone calls alone. There were also 712 requests for a patrolman, 95 aided cases, 83 accident cases, 1,075 alarms received, and 54 arrests. (3)

Because the village is located on the Nassau-Suffolk County line, the Amityville Police worked closely with both counties. In 1942 they discarded the one-way radios and installed a two-way radio system with its own transmitter at police headquarters. This was a great advancement for Amityville in police communications.

The force consisted of 15 men in 1950. Their salaries were as follows: Chief - $3,850, Lieutenant - $3,600, Sergeant - $3,450, Patrolman - $3,350. (4) During the hot summers, the men wore lightweight white shirts. The department then switched to lightweight blue shirts because the white became too wilted and dirty. The force today wears navy blue shirts and pants.

The village installed parking meters in the summer of 1950. They were rented to the village for $2 a year for each with the option to buy them within two years. The village bought a scooter and appointed a new patrolman to take care of these meters. During the first month of operation, $1,716.57 was collected from the 282 meters. The village has recently done away with the parking meters in the center of the village and now allows a 30 minute parking time.

In December of 1950, the Federal Communications Commission made it imperative that the Police Department buy new radio equipment. They changed from short wave to a frequency modulation radio system. It cost the department $2,500.

Chief Smith retired in 1953, after 27 years on the force, at the age of 63. He served under four police chiefs and was the first village employee to retire under the State Pension Plan. James J. Fitzpatrick was the next chief. The police force consisted of 7 men when he started in 1926, and had grown to 17 by the time he retired in 1956.

Chief William Kay was appointed by the village board on May 31, 1956. He was very active in youth programs since he joined the force in 1939. He established the Juvenile Aid Bureau in the department in 1958. He also lectured to students on safety and crime. The year Kay took over, the Police Blotter recorded 1,627 requests for a patrolman, 248 auto accidents, 207 aided cases, 276 vehicle summonses, 100 arrests, and 42 juvenile aid cards. (5)

In November, 1958, the citizens of Amityville were asked to vote on whether or not the Amityville Police Department should be turned over to Suffolk County. The majority of the voters found the department to be very effective. They decided not to go to the county by a count of 1,579 to 927. A year later the question was again raised. Because there were more reasons to stay independent rather than to go county, the voters once again defeated the idea of going to Suffolk County, 1,841 to 818.

As the community grew, the demand for increased police protection also grew. The methods and equipment of the department was improved to keep up with the sharp increase in crime. The Police Blotter in 1965 recorded 2,904 requests for a patrolman, 315 auto accidents, 332 aided cases, 466 summonses, 212 arrests and 40 resuscitator uses. (6)

The village population was about 10,000 in 1966. The police department was composed of 20 men, 1 chief, 1 lieutenant, 5 sergeants, and 13 patrolmen. The department had 3 marked patrol cars, 2 unmarked cars, and 1 unmarked station wagon. Each car carried equipment necessary in case of emergencies. Each car also had a two-way radio system and a receiver, capable of monitoring all Suffolk County police calls on the south side frequency. Other equipment of the department consisted of three 12 guage automatic shotguns, one automatic rifle, one sub-machine gun, riot helmets, batons, and a radar set. (7)

In the last 20 years, the Amityville Police Department has advanced to the high technology standards of the rest of the police departments on Long Island. Today, the 26 officers of the force are overseen by Chief Ken Greguski, The force has 4 marked patrol cars, 2 unmarked cars, and 1 four wheel drive, off road vehicle. All the patrol cars are equipped with the latest in technology, such as speed radar guns and high performance motors.

In the 93 years of its existence, the Amityville Police Department has advanced greatly. Today, patrol cars are always patrolling the village and are at the scene of an accident, fire, or medical emergency in a matter of minutes. Many villagers feel well protected with the force constantly on patrol.

## ENDNOTES

1. The Triangle Building today is occupied by a hair styling salon, a nail salon, a jeweler, and a travel agent.
2. Zirpolo, Anthony C., History of the Amityville Police Department, Suffolk County Police Academy, June 22, 1966, p.3.
3. Chichester, Kathy, "The Amityville Police Department: Its Beginning Through the Great Depression:, Amityville: The First Half of the 20th Century, Copyright, 1984, p.32.
4. Zirpolo, History of Amityville Police Department, p.4.

5. Ibid, p.6.

6. Chichester, "The Amityville Police Department", p.33.

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3. Fallot, Robert, Safeguarding Lines and Property. Police Protection When the Village was Incorporated, Copyright, April 3, 1936.

4. Ruggles, Cecil H., Amityville Officers of the Law, Published by Amityville Historical Society.

5. Zirpolo, Anthony C., History of the Amityville Police Department, Suffolk County Police Academy, June 22, 1966.

# IX THE FAMOUS WHO HAVE BEEN A PART OF AMITYVILLE

Margaret Egan

Our town became the Incorporated Village of Amityville on March 3, 1894, and since then has become known as "the friendly bay village". It began chiefly as a farming village, but as the nineteenth century drew to a close, the town became somewhat of a summer resort spot. It was a haven for city residents searching for a cool, quiet place to spend the summer months. Numerous hotels, such as the New Point, hosted these guests while regular ferries carried them across the bay. Among these guests came some wealthy and affluent visitors. Some stayed in the formidable hotels, while others were hosted by local families. The introduction of the automobile as a formal means of transportation ended the lives of the big hotels in town. Through it all, Amityville has remained bay-oriented, which is what attracts most of its residents to this day. The town can also boast a number of famous personages who either lived here or passed through momentarily. While some may say that such information is irrelevent, it should be important to us because it is part of our own local history.

Beginning in the early twentieth century, Amityville was the residence of some well-known actors and entertainers, the most permanent of these residents being Fred Stone. He and his family stayed in a house built on Clocks Boulevard from 1905 to 1923. Stone invited and attracted many of his friends to Amityville, including the vaudevillian, Will Rogers. Rogers even rented a house across the street from Stone, where his son James Blake Rogers was born. The famous author, Rex Beach, also spent time here since his wife was the sister of Stone's wife. Once, when Beach was giving Rogers diving lesons, Rogers dove into too shallow water in the bay and almost broke his neck. His chief lassoing arm was, for a time, paralyzed, and he was forced to use the other arm. He also had to learn to do more talking during his routine to make up for the difference. It is this combination of fast talking and lassoing which made him famous in vaudeville.

Fred Stone's Chin-Chin Ranch used to be located on a forty acre plot of land off Clocks Boulevard and Merrick Road. The ranch had cabins and many stables. It became the scene of polo matches, in which Vernon Castle often played, and the site of high school football matches. Vernon and Irene Castle, the famous pair of dancers, also visited the home of the Stone's. The author of an undated Amityville newspaper recollects: "We started going over to the hotel (Newpoint) at that time and organized the ball team which we called the Newpoint Team...we played and beat a team of actors organized by Fred Stone. Fred Stone and Nat Wills, a popular vaudeville actor of that period, were on the actor's team. I believe Rex Beach, Fred Stone's brother-in-law, and well-known author, also played with the actors." (1) The ranch gave a small section of Amityville a real western flavor, as Will Rogers could be seen practicing with the cowhands that Stone imported from the west.

The well-known female rifle expert, Annie Oakley, boarded at Ocean Avenue with the Bennet family. She was widely known for her shooting performances with Buffalo Bill during the 1900's. She even gave some of the men of Amityville some shooting lessons.

Hazel Dawn, a well-known actress at about the same time as Stone and Rogers, lived in a house on Clocks Boulevard while Brian Dennehy lived during the fifties in a house on Sunset Avenue. He organized local amateurs in a production of "Funny Girl". Another famous entertainer, Francisco Valentino, the Metropolitan Opera star, spoke at the old high school in 1944.

Benjamin Britton, the famous composer, stayed in Amityville during World War II to escape the bombings in England. He often dined at Marion Drake's boarding house at 21 Ireland Place. Unfortunately, the boarding house was torn down and replaced by a parking lot.

The naturalist, Louise Reed, lived at 71 Oak Street where he diverted a stream to a pond as a home for fresh fish.

Alfred E. Smith, before becoming governor of New York, stayed in Dr. Parker's house at the end of Ocean Avenue which, unfortunately, no longer exists. He spent summers in Amityville and even officiated at the ceremonies marking the opening of the Huntington-Amityville trolley line on August 25, 1909.

There have been numerous other politicians in Amityville: Theodore Roosevelt stopped in at the Amityville Train Station on his return from the Rough Rider's training camp out east. In 1968, Richard Nixon and Nelson Rockefeller came through the town, driving in an open car down Broadway, to Merrick Road and out east. Eleanor Roosevelt, wife of the then late President Franklin Roosevelt, gave a speech to the Needlework Guild at St. Mary's Parish hall. She also spoke from the stage of the Amityville Memorial High School on Merrick Road. Senator Joseph McCarthy, known for his fanatical anti-communist stand during the fifties, also spoke from the stage of the high school on Merrick Road.

Tom Downey, a current representative in Congress, lives now with his family on the corner of Cedar Street and Oldfield Avenue.

Even the infamous gangster Al Capone spent some time in Amityville in a house on Dewey Avenue. He and members of his notorious gang could be seen playing baseball on the lawn of the house.

Amityville was also the site of an historic event. On September 11, 1916, Lawrence Sperry "demonstrated to U.S. personnel the Sperry Aerial Torpedo". (2) It was the world's very first unmanned guided missile on Navy N-9 seaplanes.

Other personalities are: Henry Gladstone, who summered in Amityville in a house on the corner of Ocean Avenue and Prospect Street, Ernest Truecks of the movie industry, who lived for quite some time on Grand Central Avenue, and Ed Lowe, a writer for Newsday, who now lives on Grand Central Avenue also. Amityville even had a Russian count as a resident for several years. Very little was known about Count Michael Ostinoff who lived in a large house which once stood across the street from the high school on Merrick Road. His large home was torn down after it was vacated.

Probably the most noteworthy and the one which raises the most questions is the house that George Washington is supposed to have stayed in. While on Long Island, which was then sparsely populated, President Washington had dinner at the inn of Zebulon Ketchum on April 21, 1790. It is believed that the farm house was moved and is now a part of a house on Bayview Avenue.

And so, Amityville, although a basically quiet town, can claim that it saw many interesting and famous faces pass through it. We have been fortunate to have such people live among us and become a part of our beautiful community..

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to give a special thanks to the Amityville Historical Society for being so helpful in offering information to contribute to this paper.

## ENDNOTES

1. Excerpt from undated article "Clock's Boulevard, Home of Famous Personages" author unknown, Amityville Historical Society.

2. Excerpt from plaque at the intersection of Ocean Avenue and Richmond Avenue commemorating Lawrence Sperry's achievement.

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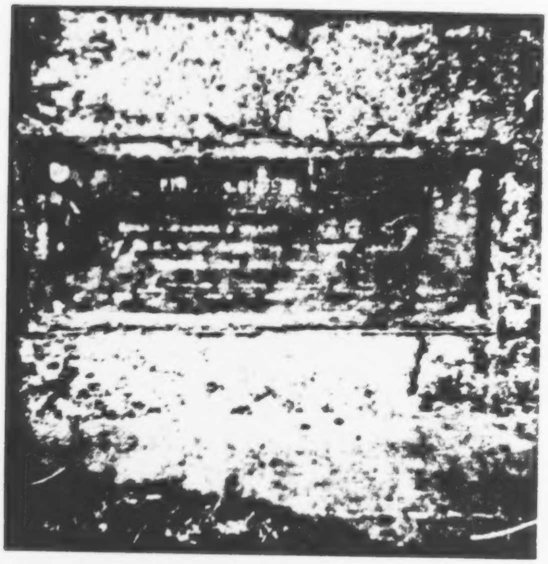
Lauder, William; A Brief History of Amityville, the Amityville Historical Society, New York, 1973

Will Rogers is met at the Amityville train station by Fred Stone in a carriage drawn by four horses.

Fred Stone's large home on Clock's Boulevard



Plaque at the corner of Ocean Avenue and Richmond Avenue which commemorates Lawrence Sperry's launch of the first guided missile on September 11, 1916.

Bennet home on Ocean Avenue where Annie Oakley roomed.

Henry Gladstone's home on the Southwest corner of Ocean Avenue and Prospect Street.

# X THE HISTORY OF AMITYVILLE STREETS

Janet Kutch

## Introduction

The streets of Amityville have changed drastically over the years, like most streets do. The names of some of them have also changed. Some streets were named after people who have either owned property on the land where the street is located or after families who have lived in Amityville for many years. Other streets got their names because of certain characteristics they acquired over the years. In 1894 Amityville became an incorporated village. The Village then owned the majority of the streets and had the right to change the names of them if they wanted to.

## Families and Streets

The majority of the streets were named after families who have lived in Amityville. Ketcham Avenue was named after John and Philip Ketchum. John made one of the first land purchases from the Massapequa Indians. Philip fled to Westneck (Amityville) to escape British forces. Sterling Place was a street that was named after Fanny Sterling. She was the wife of Herman Ketcham whose family had many houses along this street. The Robbins brothers owned a farm on the west side of Richmond Avenue. Now there is a street located west of Richmond Avenue called Robbins Avenue. Richmond Avenue was named after Dr. George D. Richmond, who was one of Amityville's first physicians. His house still remains standing today, but it is no longer located on Richmond Avenue. It is located on Ocean Avenue. Captain Israel VanNostrand, a member of the Life Saving Service, has a street named after him called VanNostrand Place. LeBrun was named after a realtor called Jack LeBrun and Anita Place was named after his wife. Carlton Avenue obtained its name after Carl Chichester. He was a well-known bayman, gunner and decoy carver. Hamilton Avenue was named after Hamilton Alexander. Alexander was a nephew of Mary Homans who wrote numerous articles in the Long Island Sun about the history of Amityville. Ireland Place and South Ireland Place ran through the Ireland family's land. They owned a grist mill from 1790-1916. Grace Myton Ireland was the wife of one of the Irelands. She had Grace Court named after her.

Other streets were named after farmers whose land was later cut through to make streets. For example, the Braham family lived in the area where Braham Avenue is now located. William Henry Wanser was the name given to the street Wanser Place. He also owned a farm here. Purdy Lane was named after the farmers Albert and Seth Purdy. Terry owned some property off Bayview Avenue - now there stands Terry Avenue off of Bayview Avenue.

Powell's owned farm land near what is now called Oak Street and Peterkin Park. Wellington Avenue was named after Wellington Powell. Down the street they owned the livery stable of Amityville.

Coles Avenue was named after Coles Ketcham. Chichester Avenue acquired it's name after Philip Chichester. Edward Bourdette, who developed the land south of Ocean Avenue, has Bourdette Place in honor of him.

## Streets That Have Disappeared

Many streets in Amityville have had their names changed for one reason or another. Other streets can no longer be located. For instance, Sterling Place was once called Lumber Street. Located on Lumber Street was the town's lumber yard. Now it is called Sterling Place after Fanny Sterling, who was married to a Ketcham. Inglee Place and Wilmarth Street can no longer be located. Woodlawn Avenue is now called Bayview Avenue and Ocean Avenue was once called Bayview Avenue.

An 1858 map of Amityville shows Broadway or Route 110 to be known as the Road to Farmingdale. Also in 1858, Merrick Road was known as Babylon and Hempstead Turnpike. Then in 1888, it was known as South Turnpike. Division Avenue, as it was once called, is now known as Louden Avenue after the Louden Family who owned property there. Cedar Street in Amityville used to be called Burche's Lane.

## More Facts About the Streets of Amityville

Some streets of Amityville have common names; for example, Bayview Avenue, Oak Street, Cedar Street, Ocean Avenue and Grand Central Avenue. The names of these streets are pretty much self-explanatory. Cedar Street acquired it's name because many cedar trees grew there. Oak Street also was named after the many oak trees that grew there. Bayview Avenue and Ocean Avenue were roads that led to the Great South Bay. Around the 1900's, Grand Central Avenue was built. This street probably acquired it's name because the hotels were located at the end of this road. So it was the main or central road to the hotels. Richmond Avenue became the first oncrete road in Amityville.

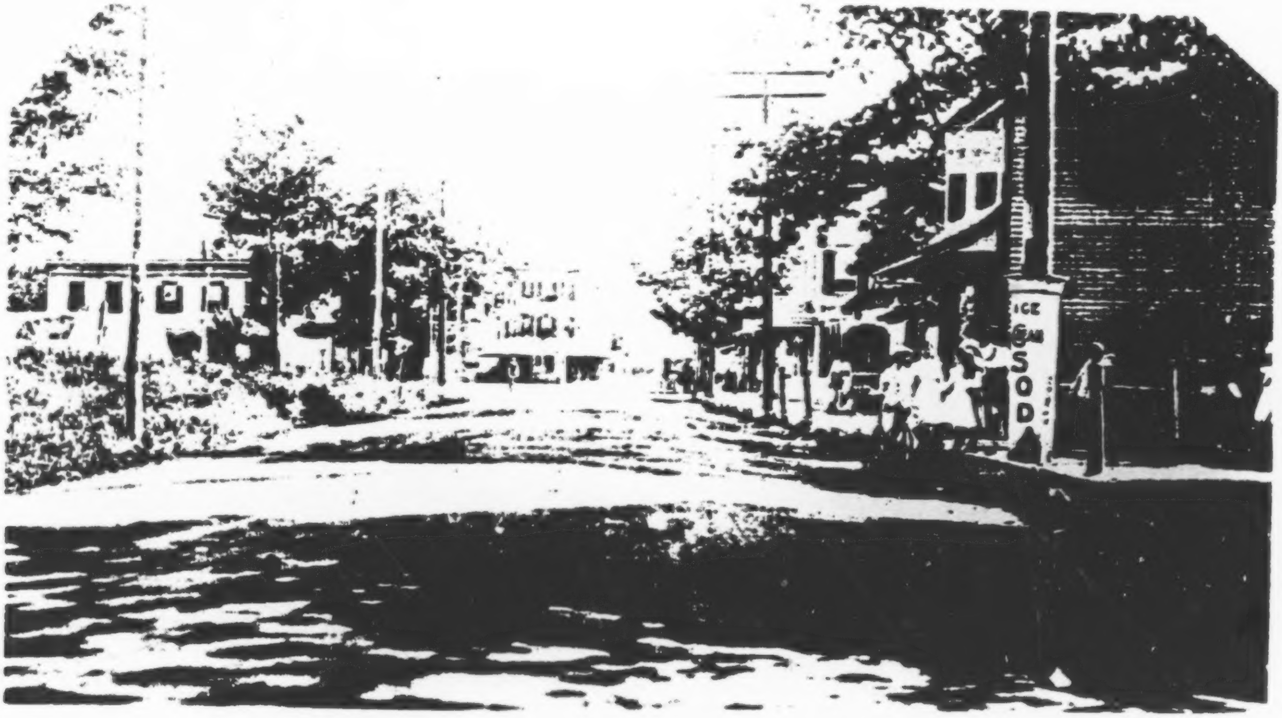
Avon Place, Lake Drive and Union Avenue were developed between 1888 and 1902. J. E. Ireland's mill pond, now called Avon Lake is much smaller than it was 90 years ago. When they started to build houses around there, they filled in the pond which made it smaller. According to Mr. Seth Purdy, curator at the Lauder Museum in Amityville, the assumption is that Avon Place obtained its name from the home town of William Shakespeare which was Stratford-Upon-Avon.

Washington Avenue to West Smith Street wasn't developed until after 1928. Before 1928, Washington Avenue was the last street on the north side of Amityville. "Washington Avenue was cut through the fields from Broadway to County Line Road by the late Garry Haff and his son, the late Sammuel Haff." (1) They also opened Locust Avenue and Lafayette Avenue. Many early families of Amityville have lived on Washington Avenue; besides the Haffs, William Lauder, Sr. and Jr., Jesse Purdy, and Mr. and Mrs. Pearsall.

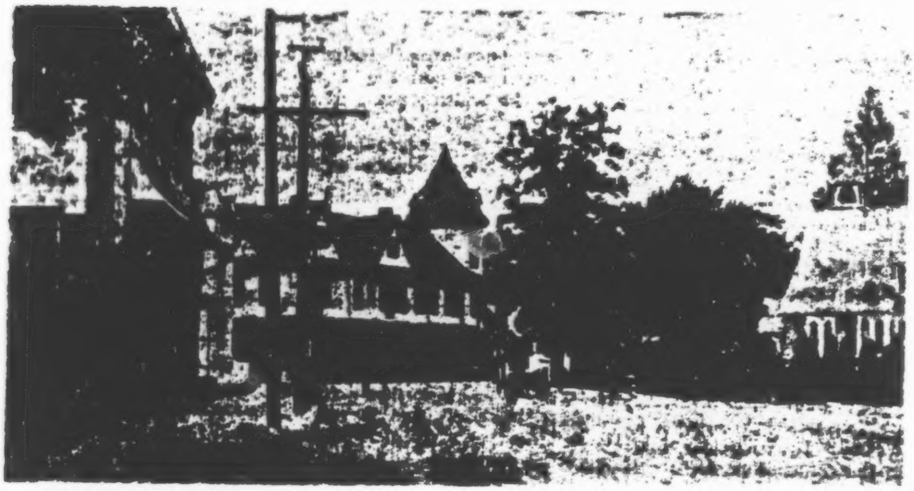
About 65 years ago Baldwin Place was opened. The street cut through the Baldwin Farm which was located on the northern side of Merrick Road. "It was a successful development. I believe the first residents of Baldwin Place were Mr. and Mrs. Irving T. Ketcham and Mr. and Mrs. Albert Ladick and their two daughters." (2) As of 1967, only two of the early settlers were still living on Baldwin Place; the Ladicks and Pearsalls. The residents of Baldwin Place and Melrose Avenue have been in disagreement for a long time over the name that should be placed on the signpost on the corner of Merrick Road. In an effort to settle this disagreement, a sign with both names was placed by the authorities on the corner. Even though these streets belong to the Town of Oyster Bay because of their locality, the children are in the Amityville School District. "The majority of the residents attend churches in Amityville and join in the social life of the village." (3)

Merrick Road was once a narrow winding dirt road. Now it has become a highway filled with speeding traffic. "Long, long ago the road was an Indian trail, marked by trees which were twisted in a certain manner. It is said that the huge tree which stood for many years in front of Teddy's Maple Inn was a trail marker." (4)

Bennett Place, like Baldwin Place, was cut through the property of the Bennetts. "Through the years, Bennett Place has remained one of our nicest residential streets, with well-kept homes and grounds. It is a pleasant street on which to live." (5)

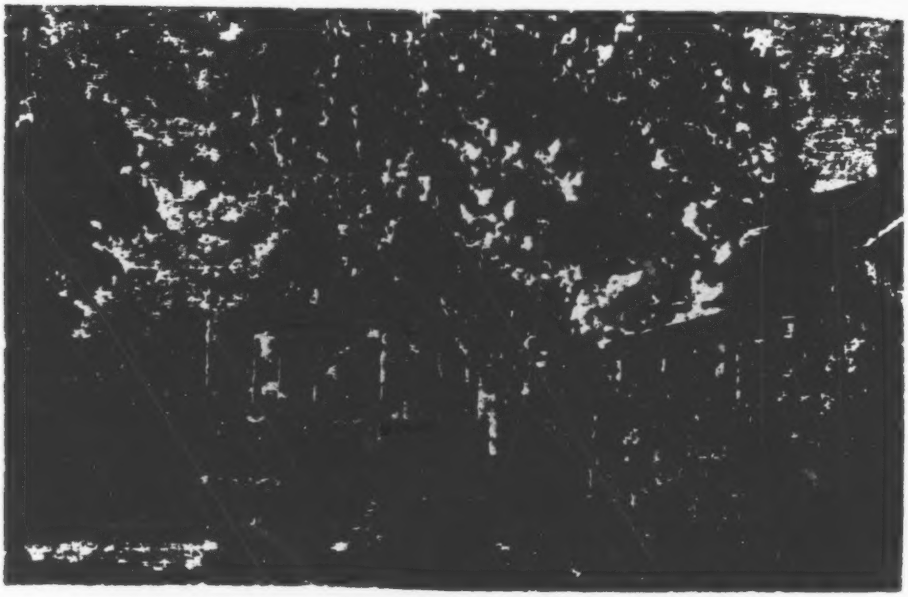


Broadway Looking South to the Triangle Building (1904)



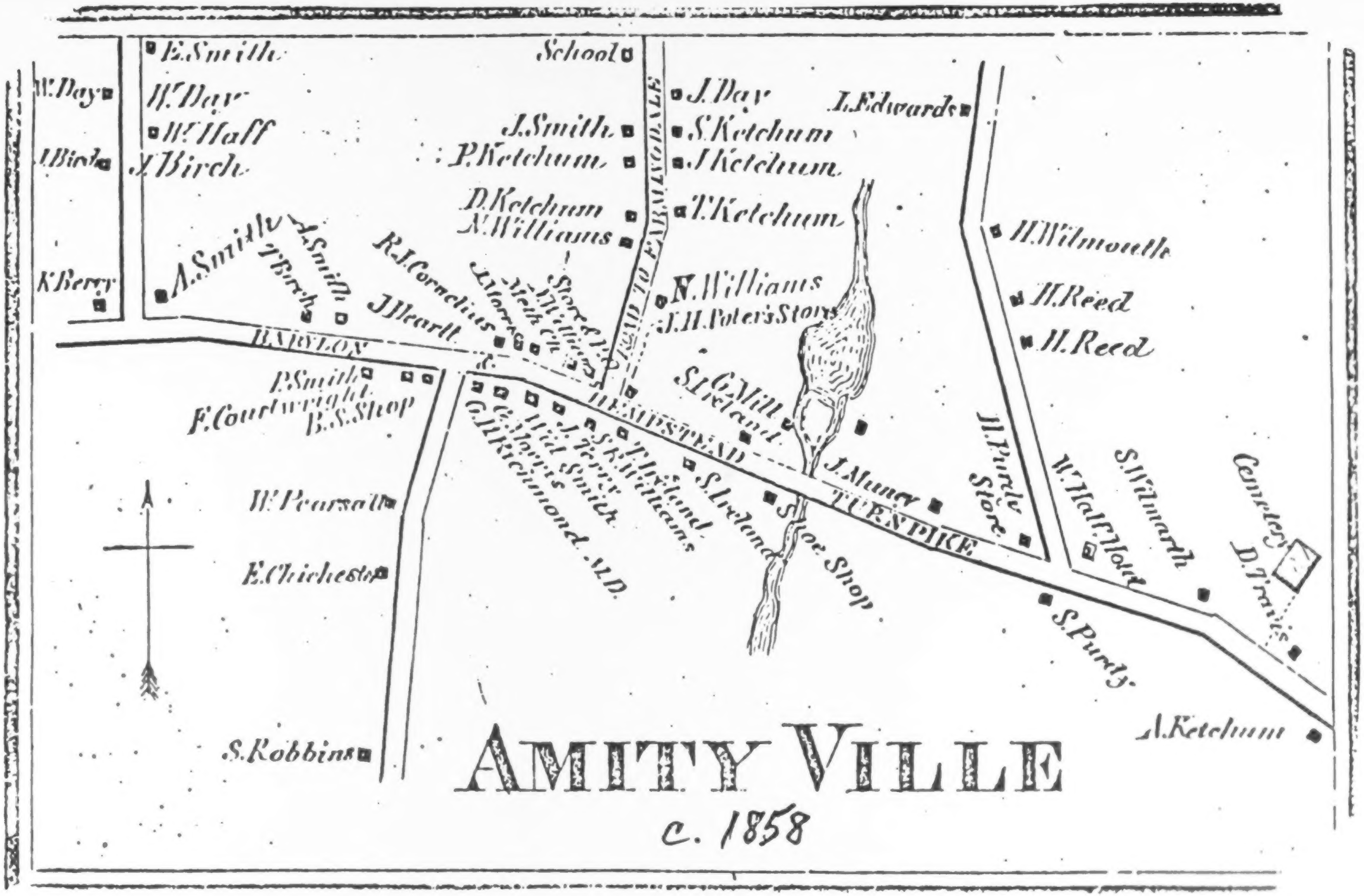
Horses and wagons on Broadway, Amityville, with the Triangle Building, St. Mary's Episcopal Church, the Frank Smith department store and the Bank of Amityville.

North Broadway, Amityville, looking north from the Edgett house (on the right), the site of the present Brunswick Hospital grounds.



Albany Avenue, looking south from Dixon Avenue in the early 1900's.

Merrick Road, looking west, (1904)


E. Smith
School
W. Day
W. Day
W. Haff
J. Birch
I. Bird
J. Day
J. Smith
S. Ketchum
I. Edwards
P. Ketchum
J. Ketchum
D. Ketchum
T. Ketchum
N. Williams
H. Wilmouth
K. Berry
A. Smith
T. Birch
A. Smith
R. J. Cornelius
J. Hearll
J. Morris
Meth. Ch.
S. Miller
Store & P.O.
ROAD TO FARMINGDALE
N. Williams
J. H. Poter's Store
H. Reed
H. Reed
BABYLON
P. Smith
F. Courtwright
B. S. Shop
G. Mill
S. Ireland
HEMPSTEAD
TURNPIKE
C. Wid. Smith
G. Morris
G. H. Richmond M.D.
J. Terry
S. R. Williams
T. Ireland
S. Ireland
Shoe Shop
J. Muncy
H. Purdy Store
W. Half Hotel
S. Wilmarth
Cemetery
D. Travis
W. Pearsall
E. Chichester
S. Purdy
A. Ketchum
S. Robbins

# AMITY VILLE

c. 1858

## CONCLUSION

Amityville has changed in many ways over the last century, especially the streets. The streets are no longer winding dirt roads. They are now main streets on which many automobiles travel every day. There are many more streets now than there were just 60 years ago. Each street has a special story about them. It is hard to imagine Amityville as a town with only a few main roads. Amityville has grown to be a prosperous town with many roads.

## ENDNOTES

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2. May C. Baldwin, History of Amityville, March 23, 1967
3. Ibid.
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5. May C. Baldwin, History of Amityville, July 28, 1966

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XI

# AMITYVILLE SPORTS:

## A Written and Pictorial Study

## 1920 - 1950

John Daley and Jeff Weisman

Little is known today about Amityville sports of the past. In fact information on Amityville sports prior to 1950 is difficult to come by. The only true way to learn about the past is to talk to the people of the time who participated in the events that made that era.

In the past, Amityville school has won many championships. These championships include county, league, Long Island, and even out of state championships, such as the Penn Relays. For example, in 1942, the track team, under the leadership of Henry A. Kittle, went to the Penn Relays and brought home a Silver medal.

1942 Relay Team - Joe Attenborough, George Chalfant, Donald Oehl and Bill Kretz

Another achievement of the Amityville track team that same year was that Bill Kretz broke the county half-mile record. His time was 1:58, and stood as the record for four years.

Through our research, we discovered an amusing fact. This 1942 track team had no track to run on at Amityville. All their meets were held elsewhere, and for practice they ran around the baseball field. This explains the nickname they had, "The Trackless Wonders".

Probably the most successful sport that Amityville participated in was football. It all started in 1925 when high school students organized themselves into teams and played three scrimmage games. In 1926, the Amityville School Board purchased thirteen uniforms and hired Coach T. Bragow. That year Coach Bragow led the football team to only one victory, an overwhelming 6 - 0 win over

Bill Kretz Running the Half-mile

Greenport!

This losing streak would not last for long. In 1931, Coach Homer Ball took over. His reign lasted until 1950. His lifetime career at Amityville consisted of 96 wins and 55 loses. His tradition was carried on by Lou Howard, now a Suffolk County Legislator. Since coach Howard's success has been discussed in an earlier issue of our journal, we will concentrate on Homer Ball.

…ies at Amityville Nov. 2
Ball to Be Feted by Former Athletes

Coach Ball

Before arriving at Amityville, Coach Ball was a teacher, coach, and Athletic Director at Pleasantville, New York, from 1925 - 1929. Upon leaving Pleasantville the local paper wrote "In every sport he has shown excellent coaching ability. He has produced four championship teams in baseball and basketball and has been a runner-up several times. His football teams have been unusually successful. No other man has inspired the spirit of the boys as has Mr. Ball, and the school as a a whole owes him much."

This statement could be said for Amityville five times over. Here is a short outline of his success in Amityville football"

1931 - First football championship team at Amityville undefeated in county competition

1934 - 1937 - From last game in 1934 to fourth game of 1937, his football teams went 19 games without losing, and won 16 straight games.

1939 - Defeated his former school of Pleasantville 18 - 6 and the year before 12 - 6. A quote from the Pleasantville paper read "People have not forgotten Bill Ball and they like the idea of inventing an excuse to have him come back once a year".

1931 - Suffolk County Champions

1940 - Undefeated. High point of season was a 12 - 0 win over Mineola, a Nassau County powerhouse that year.

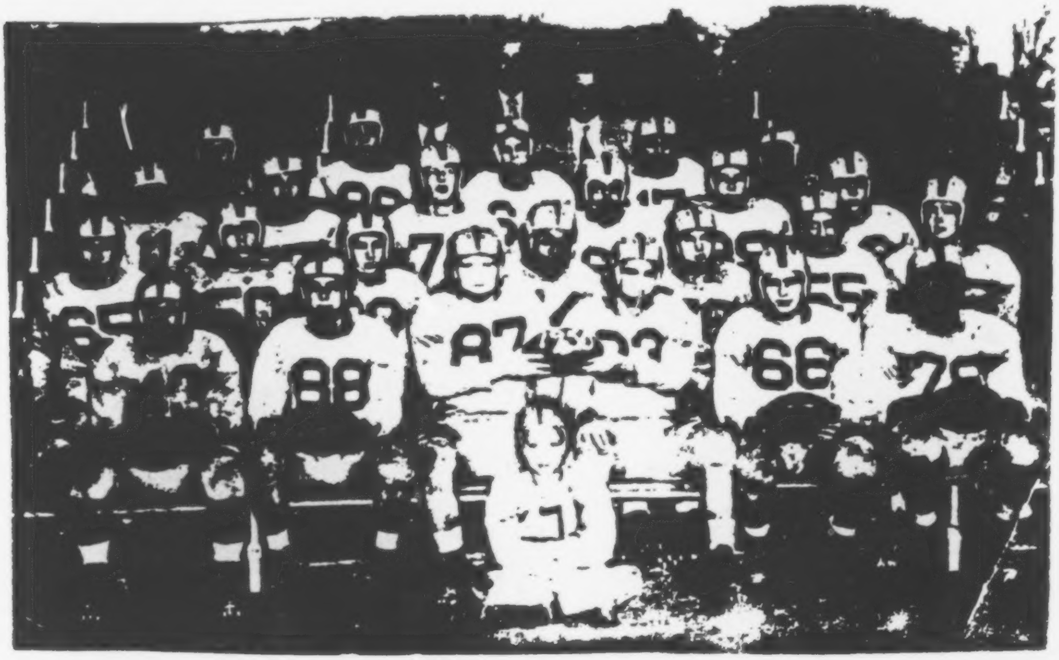
1942 - Undefeated. Team only consisted of fifteen members.

1946 - Snapped Bayshore's 20 game win streak 21 - 6. This was the only loss for Bayshore that year and for the only loss over a three year period.

1947 - Tied Bayshore for Section I championship.

1950 - Undefeated and untied in eight games. The team scored 351 points to their opponents' 44, an average of 44 to 5. They were county champs, Ball won Coach of the year and six of the team's members were selected to Newsday's All-Scholastic Team.

There were five undefeated and untied teams: 1935, 1936, 1940, 1942, 1950. And two other championship teams: 1931 - Suffolk County champs, 1947 - Section I champs.



1950 - County Champions

A unique occurance highlighted Coach Ball's career. This concerned the Kretz brothers. Each of the brothers captained an undefeated and untied team. Tom - 1936, Walter - 1940, Bill - 1942. Pictures of these teams are on the following pages.

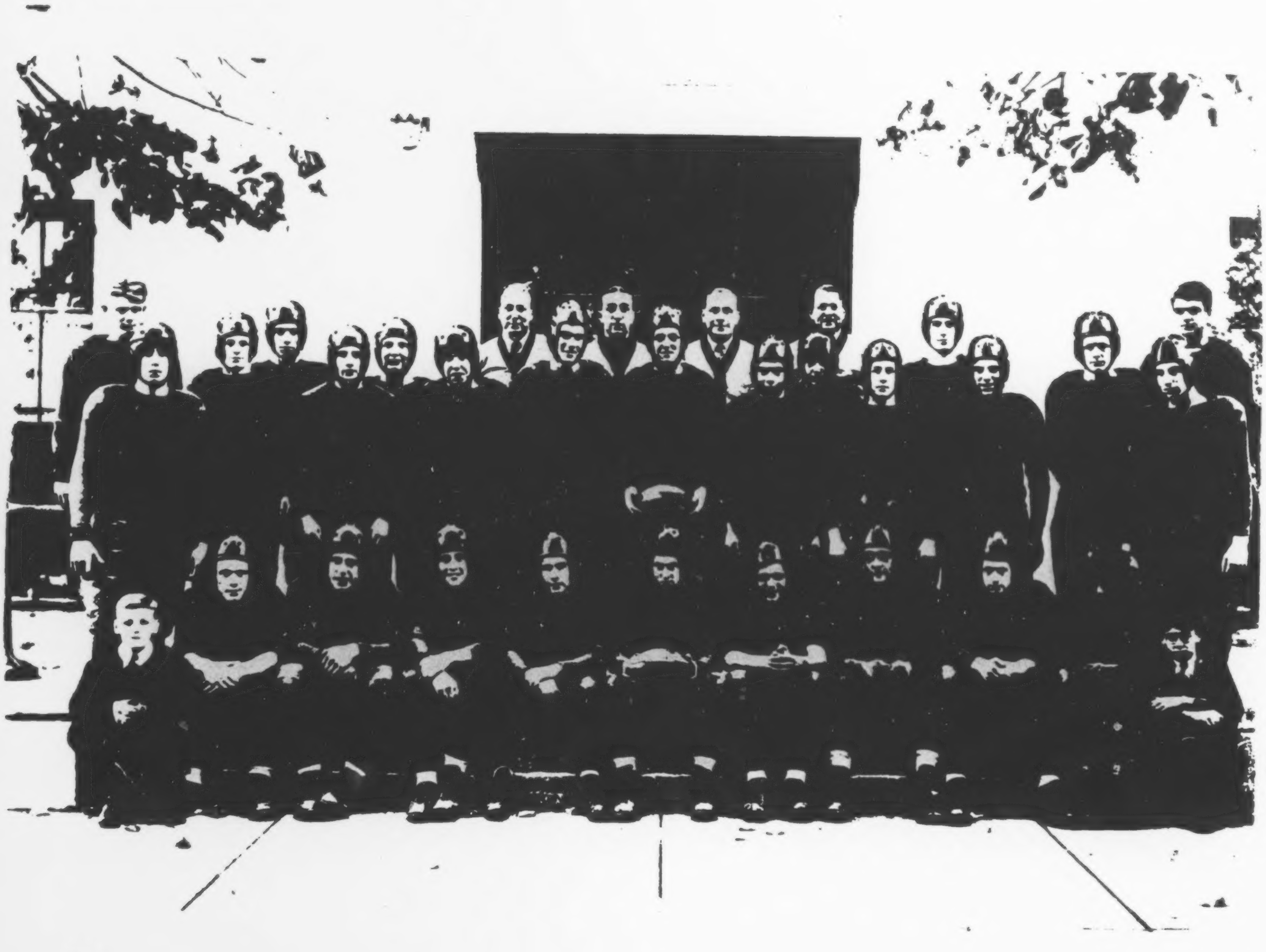
In his final year, 1950, he brought his football team to the county championship.

Coach Ball had many other accomplishments also. He was the league president of the County Athletic Association for several years. At one time he was the president of the County Athletic Association. For years Coach Ball represented Suffolk County as an executive member of the New York State Central Committee of the State Athletic Association.

He was instrumental in the instituting of a Physical Education program in Amityville schools. This later became a model for other schools in the county, as well as the state.

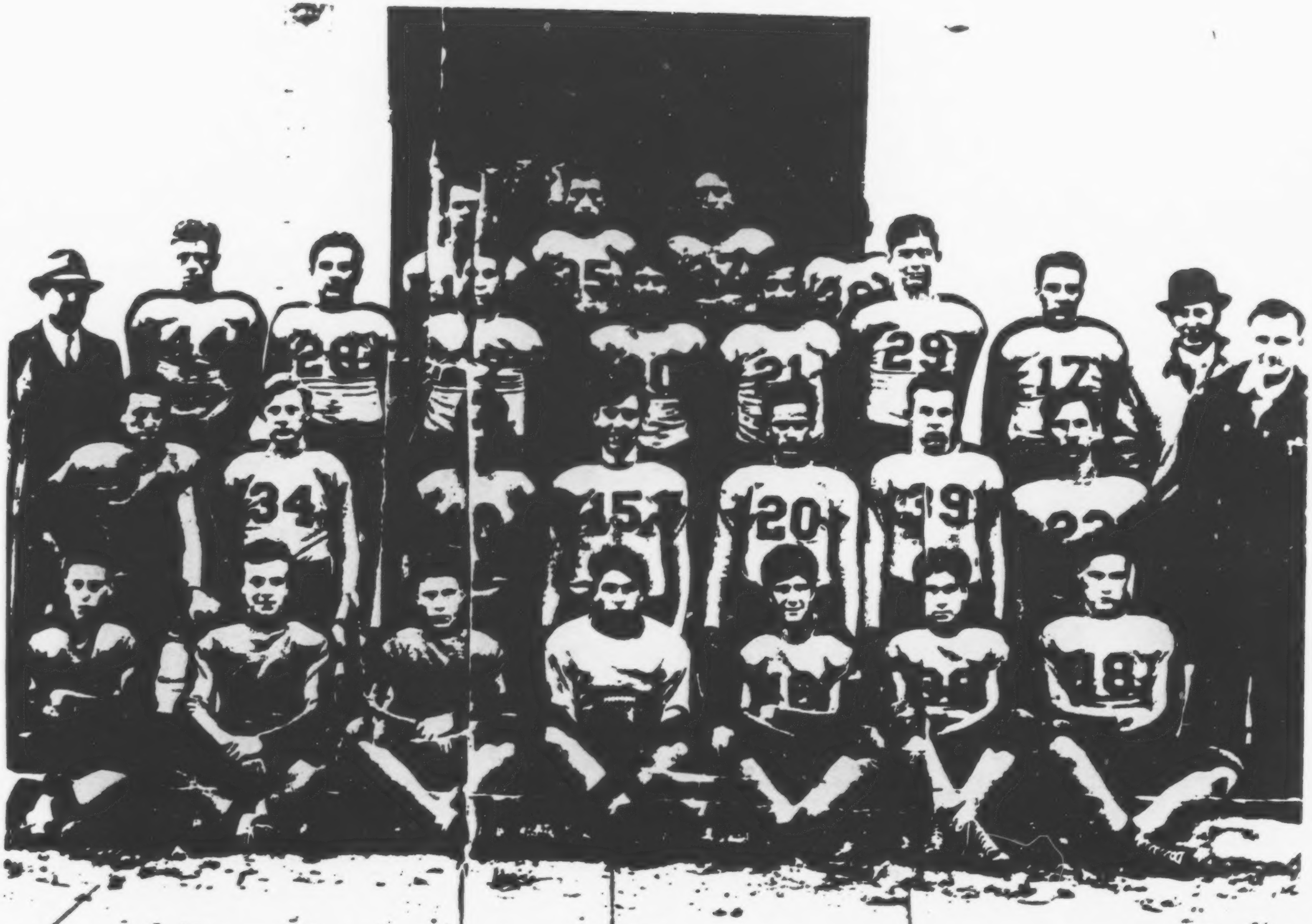
He was invited to represent New York State at the New York University's Tri-state conference on Physical Fitness.

For the conclusion of this outstanding career, an article published in the Amityville Record written November of 1950 said "During the last war, when many of his ex-students and atheletes were facing the most challenging period of



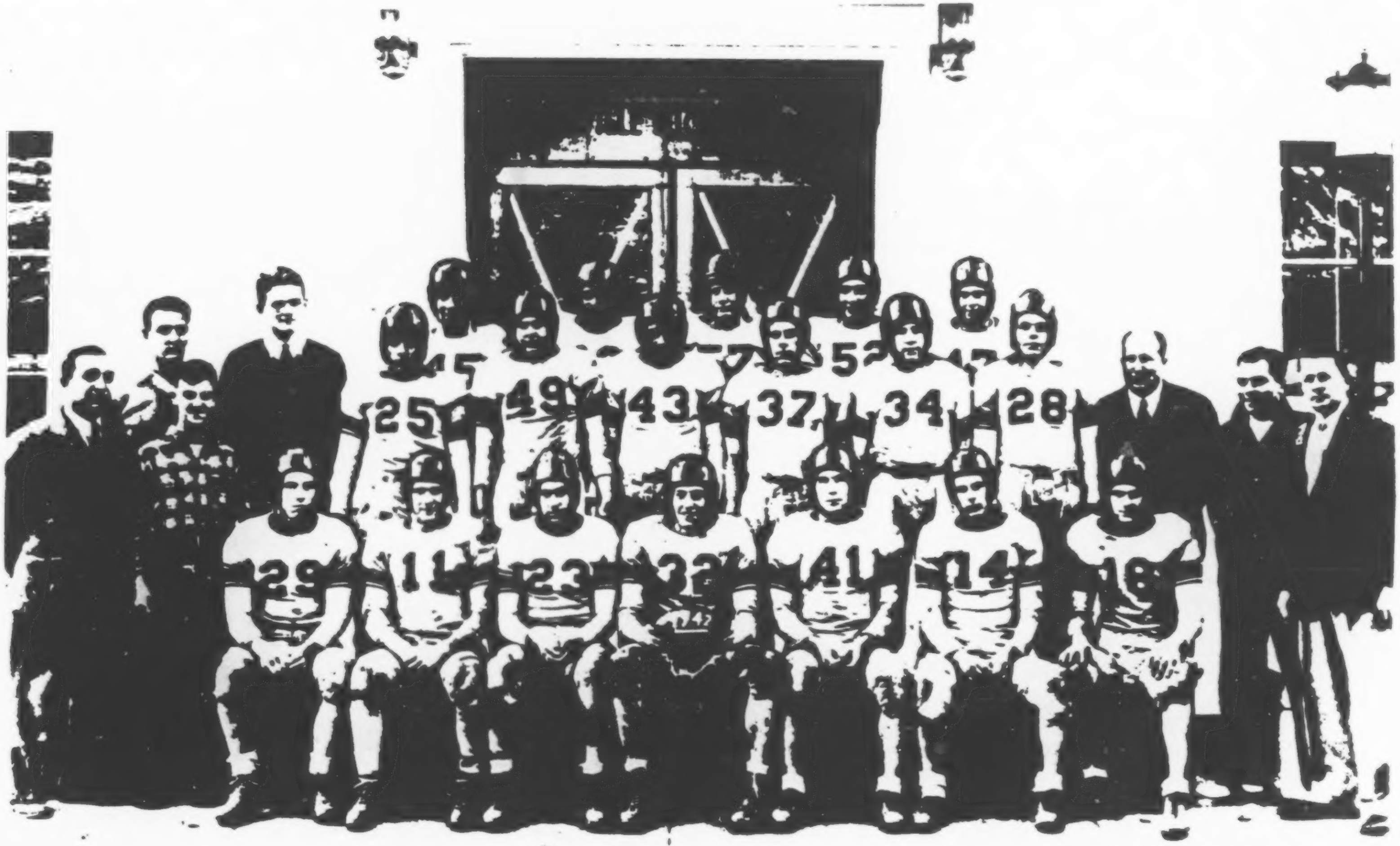
1936 - Tom

75


28
29
17
34
15
20
18

1940 - Walter

76



25
49
43
37
34
28
29
11
23
32
41
14
18

1942 - Bill

their young lives such a large number sought his counsel and guidance that Coach Ball was forced to answer by a mimeographed letter. Surely these letters to Coach from far-off places were "proof positive" of his true stature as a leader, and the real feelings harbored by the boys and men who had gone before him."

Another sport that Amityville was successful at was basketball. It all started in 1923 when the team played at Park North School. Since there were few Suffolk teams, they played in the Nassau County league. The Nassau teams included: Freeport, Oceanside, Farmingdale and Rockville Centre. Soon they entered the Western Suffolk Class B league where their chief rival was Islip.

The team's first coach, Burton Shaw, was fired for calling the field a mudhole. In 1924, Coach Penfound took over and they got a new field in Park South. In 1925, Coach Bragaw took over. In 1926 and 1927 he brought the team to the Western Suffolk championship.

1927 Western Suffolk Champions

In 1929, the Amityville basketball team went to the state championship game and won. The Coach was Bragaw and the Captain was Walter Saxton.

In 1931 and 1932, under the coaching of Homer Ball, the team won the Long Island championship.

Amityville also had some success in baseball. In 1923, the Amityville baseball team played on a small field behind Park Avenue School. In 1924 the team moved to the North parking field at the railroad station on Johns Street and Sterling Place.

The team was coached by Coach Penfound. In 1924, he brought the team to the Long Island championship game and won the title. In 1925, the team entered into the Mid Island league. This league consisted of Babylon, Lindenhurst, Farmingdale, and of course Amityville.

Coach Ball took the reins as coach upon entering Amityville. In 1934, as well as 1940, his team was league champs and when the team wasn't champ it was in contention. In 1942, the team looked as though it would have a shining season until World War II interrupted and the Navy took three starters. The team fell short of all titles that year.

1942 Baseball Team

Also during this time period Community sports were being played. In baseball there was a twilight baseball league and Amityville had a team called the Blue Sox.

In football there were two teams, the Bearcats and the Triangles. These teams developed from former High School players. The Bearcats started in 1926, and as they became more popular, some of the members broke off to form the Triangles. The Triangles lasted from 1931 to 1938. They played at Regelmans Field on the corner of Bayview and Oak Street. Although they were arch-rivals, they never played each other. The only game scheduled was cancelled due to a tornado. A picture of the 1931 Triangle team is shown below.

In conclusion, it was our pleasure to do a study on Amityville's sport's past. It was interesting for us as well as the men who helped us to write it. If anything, we hope that future generations of Amityville High School students will use this as a reference.

Dedicated to

Bill Kretz and Walter Saxton

without them this report would not have been possible

Thanks to these men, we were able to get rare photographs and information. We would like to thank both of them for their support and cooperation.

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Interview with Walter Saxton

Coach Homer Ball Testimonial: Saturday, November 2, 1963

## XII A STUDY OF AMITYVILLE GOVERNMENT

Tammie Gregg

### The Origins of Amityville

Although the need for an incorporated village did not arise until 1894, and then under much protest, the community of Amityville had actually existed in name for over 40 years before (Incorporation).

The area which was to become Amityville was originally a part of Huntington South West Neck, (now Huntington) which was actually a series of semi-independent towns (1653).

In 1697 four men purchased what is now considered the heart of the Amityville Village. They were John Ketcham, Jonas Platt, James Chichester and Timothy Conklin, Sr. These men did not intend to form a consolidated unit. They purchased the land as an investment, as the area was found to be rich in salt hay. The next year they bought the remaining uplands that surrounded the meadows, (their first purchase) and the Evolution of Amityville began.

### Whispers of a Coming Community

The first signs of a young community were seen in 1792, when Elijah Chichester held church services in his Broadway home. The church has always been a binding force in the community of Amityville. The community responded positively to this development and went on to acquire a church (building) on Montauk Highway, and in 1823 the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Amityville was established.

Signers of the Declaration of Intention were the following: E.F. Preston, J.S. Davis, H.A. VanTassel, Frank W. Smith, George T. Homan, J.S. Baldwin, James G. Shea, O.J. Wilsey, B. Baldwin, Edw. T. Purdy, G.H. Conley, and S.R. Williams. This is only a partial list. These men all owned a third of land and this is the main reason they were allowed to sign the document.

The signers, like the purchasers of the original village, were members of the community for many years. Their families were respected and held an interest in community affairs.

### The Rocky Road to Incorporation

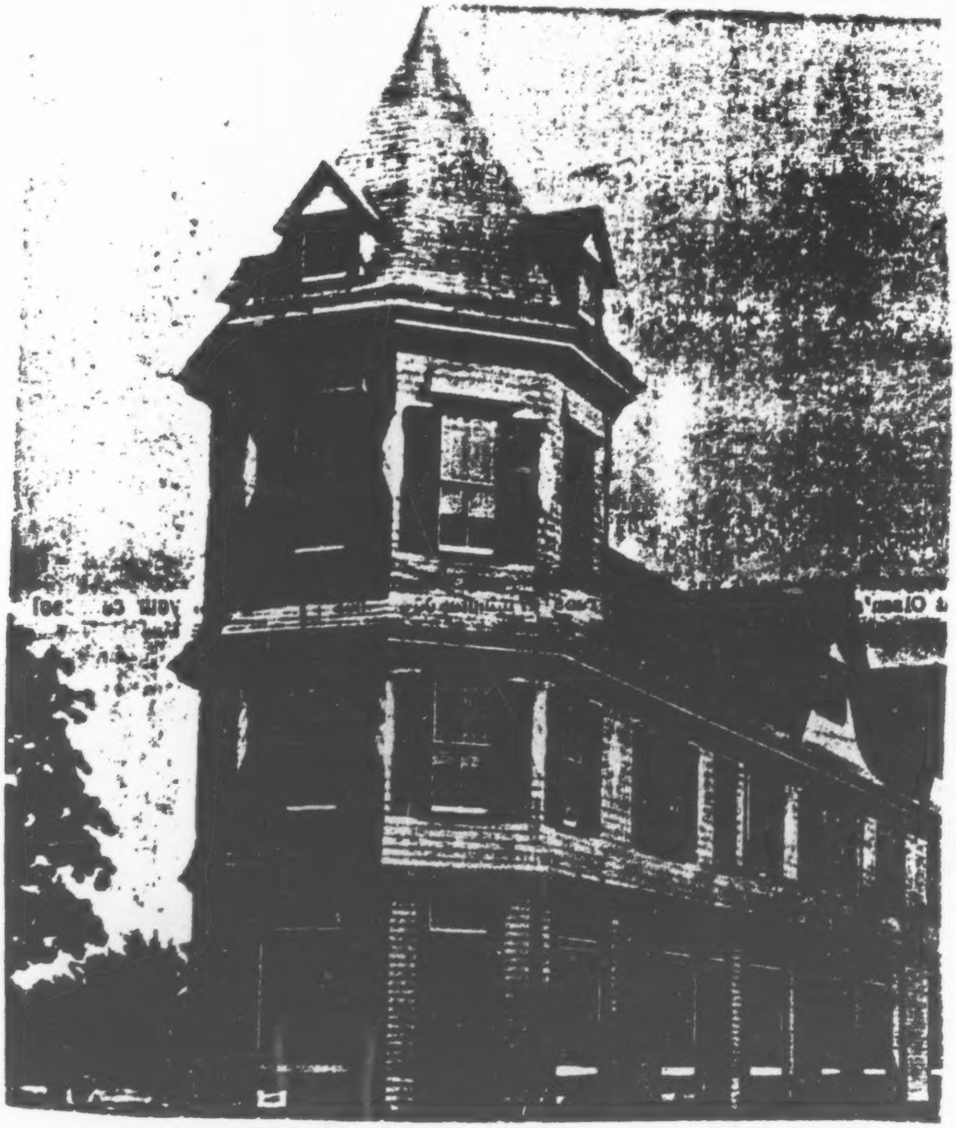
Incorporation was not exactly hailed by all. George A. Hooper, attorney handling incorporation, appointed a committee, run by George T. Homans and Charles Wood, to see that procedings for incorporation went through. Incorporation voted on on February 26, 1894, was carried by a mere 15 votes, 174 - 159. It was later disputed when in October of the following year a petition was being signed to nonincorporate. It was defeated by 162 - 101, but not without whispers of a scandal.

Leander Wright, a liveryman turned politician, acting as the modern-day J.R. Ewing, had worded the incorporation document in such a way that many voters actually thought they were voting for nonincorporation, when they were really voting to incorporate.

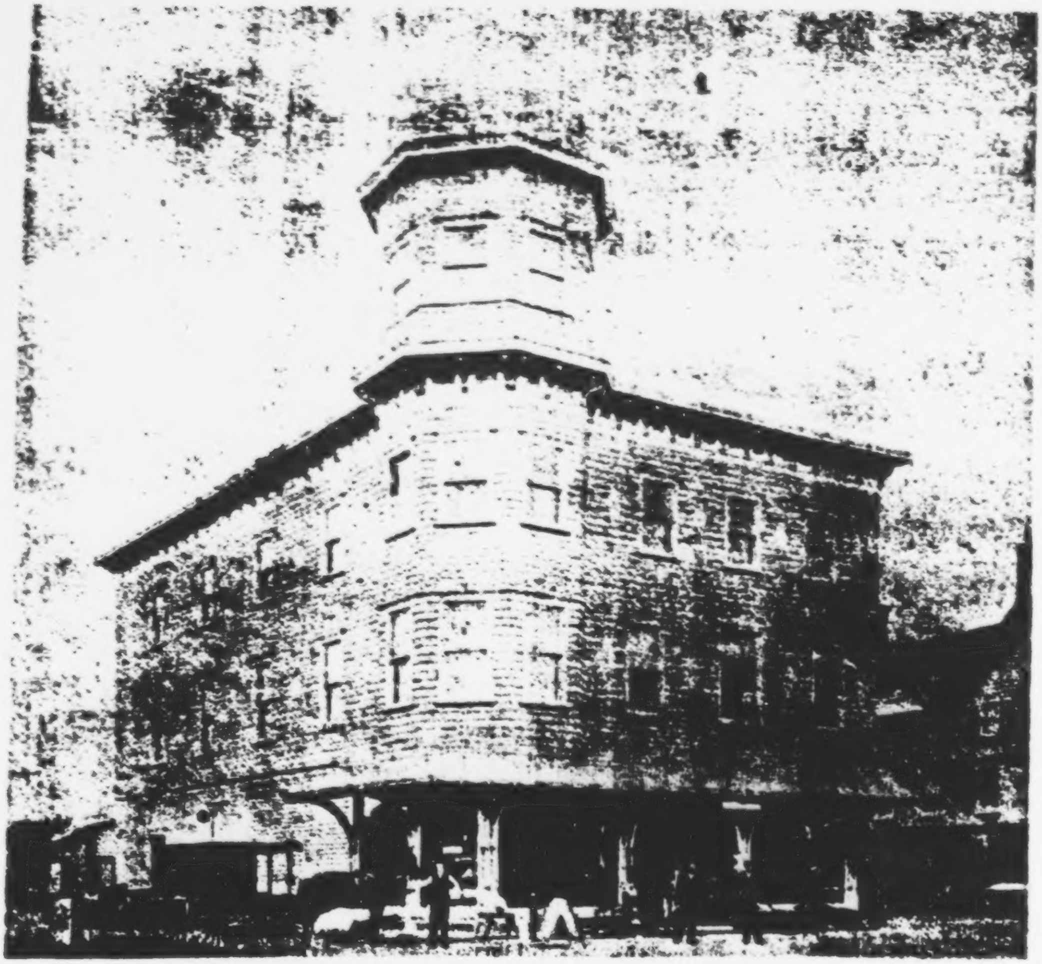
## Election Day

The first election day after incorporation was April, 1894 (now held in March). There were two parties, the Village Union, led by Charles Wood, owner of Amityville's lumber yard, for president, and George T. Homans and William Skinner for trustees. Willis B. Inglee and John Kartwright ran for treasurer and collector. The rival party, that ran under the heading of the Citizen's League, was led by Fred Burr for President, James Purdy, William Ketcham and Asa Chichester for trustees. The Union Party was victorious. The title of Mayor was not adopted until 1907 when Dr. John F. Louden took office.

The Village board consisted of a President (later mayor), trustees, a Treasurer, and the office of collector. They met at the Triangle building in the center of the town. Expenses for incorporation were borrowed on a $250 note from the Bank of Amityville.



The seat of Amityville Government - the Triangle Building



Home of the Wood Lumber Company, whose owner was 1st President of Amityville

The first actions of the new village were to establish police protection, improve the roads, create a firehouse, and supply Amityville residents with light - candlelight, that is. The latter proposition was voted down by the voters who considered candlelight an unnecessary expense.

The village hired Charles Howenstein for constable (which later became captain, and is now called police chief) for a period of three months, at the rate of $15 per month. Later it was raised to $50 per month for each patrolman.

By 1907, many changes occurred in the village. Not only had a new fire department been established in 1886, but a new school was created - Park North Elementary in 1894, and a newspaper, the Amityville Record in 1901. Amityville was also quickly gaining a reputation for being a speed trap.This speed trap became so notorious that a sign was put up on the Brooklyn Bridge stating "Beware Amityville!".

Other Developments in Amityville

As road paving began in 1905, and Mrs. Mary Myton helped establish a new library, the village came together, not only as a town but also as a government.

Following is a list of the achievements of the Amityville board:

> November 25, 1929 - Board established a zoning commission, hired Em. Basssett, at $600.00.
> January, 1930 - voted on whether to buy South Consolidated Water - to keep cost down for the voters, offer was refused but board dedication to improving the village was made apparent.
> 1930 - village initiated the coalition of a Village Board. The coalition would consist of boards from different villages and would be established to help stop common problems, as well as clear up disputes involving overlapping boundaries.

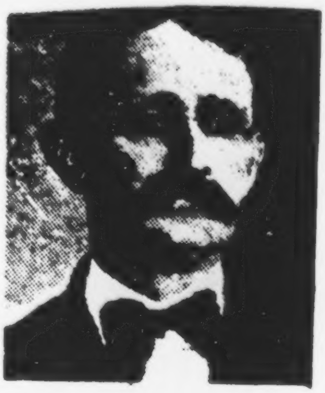
Although the board did have many outstanding achievements in its early years, that is not to say it was accomplished easily. Between March 1930 - 1931, the Board had borrowed a total of $39,000 from the First National Bank and Trust Company. To make problems worse, the village owed $9,000 in unpaid taxes for the year, 1929. The villagers, although not thrilled with the money problems, were pleased with the job the board did when it came to running the government.

Political Parties that Dominated Amityville Politics

People's Party, 1935
Union Party, Early 1900's
Citizens League, Late 1800's
Village Union, Late 1800's

To better display the workings of the Amityville Government, I have enclosed the following documents:

1. Amityville's budget for the year of 1930 - 1931
2. Minutes of the April, 1980, board meeting.



Frank W. Smith, one of the signers of the incorporation declaration

## VILLAGE OF AMITYVILLE, N.Y.

## BUDGET - 1930-1931.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **GENERAL FUND** | | | |
| **POLICE** | | | |
| Salaries (11 men) | | $20,280 | |
| Maintenance | | 1,500 | |
| Equipment | | 1,500 | |
| Uniforms | 1000 | | |
| Car | 400 | | |
| Miscel. | 100 | | |
| Traffic Marking | | 500 | |
| Miscel. | | 500 | 24,280 |
| **ADMINISTRATION** | | | |
| Salaries, Board | | 1,800 | |
| Clerk | | 3,200 | |
| Treasurer | | 600 | |
| St. Comm'r | | 700 | |
| Counsel's services | | 200 | |
| Engineer's services | | 500 | |
| Publicity Fund | | 200 | |
| Election Expenses | | 160 | |
| Insurance | | 3,250 | |
| Printing & Stat'y | | 400 | |
| Interest on notes | | 350 | |
| Miscel. | | 500 | 11,860 |
| **MUNICIPAL BUILDING MAINTENANCE** | | | |
| Janitor service | | 1,825 | |
| Phone | | 850 | |
| Light | | 450 | |
| Heat | | 550 | |
| Repairs | | 250 | |
| Miscel. | | 100 | 4,025 |
| **PUBLIC LIBRARY** | | | 3,000 |
| **VILLAGE DUMP** | | | 1,160 |
| **TRAFFIC SIGNALS** | | | |
| Maintenance | | 1,100 | |
| New | | 400 | 1,500 |
| Total GEN'L FUND | | | 45,825 |
| **FIRE DEPARTMENT FUND** | | | 5,000 |
| **HEALTH DEPARTMENT FUND** | | | |
| Health Officer | | 750 | |
| Registrar | | 125 | |
| Miscel. | | 125 | 1,000 |
| **STREET FUND** | | | |
| Payroll | | 5,550 | |
| Str. upkeep | 3750 | | |
| Cleaning | 1800 | | |
| Material | | 8,700 | |
| Oil & sand | 6050 | | |
| Cinders, stone, etc | 2650 | | |
| Maintenance | | 750 | |
| Tools | 250 | | |
| Upkeep of Equipment | 500 | | |
| Freight | | 100 | |
| Hiring Outside Labor and Equipment | | 3,000 | |
| New Equipment | | 900 | |
| Miscel. | | 500 | 19,500 |
| Forward | | | 71,325 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Forward | | $71,325 |
| **SIDEWALK FUND** | | 1,500 |
| **BOND AND INTEREST FUND** | | |
| Bond Retirement | 21,500 | |
| Interest | 11,008 | 32,508 |
| **LIGHTING FUND** | | 16,000 |
| **WATER FUND** | | |
| Budget for 1930 | 5,900 | |
| Unpaid of 1929 | 2,573 | 8,473 |
| GRAND TOTAL | | 129,806 |
| **ESTIMATED INCOME** | | |
| Income tax | 5,700 | |
| Mortgage tax | 800 | |
| Franchise tax | 400 | |
| Bank tax | 200 | |
| Interest | 275 | |
| Rent | 700 | |
| Permits | 300 | |
| Fines | 1,000 | |
| Miscel. | 125 | 9,500 |
| NET TOTAL | | 120,306 |
| BALANCE ON HAND MARCH 1st. | | 888 |
| TO BE RAISED BY TAX | | 119,418 |
| VALUATION | | $6,163,300 |
| Rate per $100 | | $1.94 |

FILED. April 14 ... 1930

Louis W. Ferris
Village Clerk.

ADOPTED by resolution of the Board of Trustees, met in regular meeting on April 28 ... 1930.

Louis W. Ferris
Village Clerk

# BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Special Meeting

April 29, 1980

Meeting called to order by Mayor Niemi at 8:00 P.M.

Salute to the Flag was led by R. Burns.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Niemi, Trustees Braun, Robinson, Pavlik, Jr. and First

ALSO PRESENT: B. Kennedy, Special Council
S. Kretz, Village Attorney
C. Schalk, Building Inspector

Mayor Niemi informed the audience that this meeting was called to discuss changes in the local laws previously submitted and heard at the Public Hearing prior to resubmission as new Introductory Local Laws.

The first of the introductory local laws to be discussed was that of Introductory Local Law #8 of the year 1979. Mr. Kennedy said this had been changed to coincide with the Town of Babylon's code so it would make it possible for people interested in property to be aware of the Board of Appeals applications. Trustee Braun moved that this be introduced as Introductory Local Law #1 of the year 1980. This was seconded by Trustee First.

Vote on the Motion: 5 ayes; 0 nays - Motion Carried

The next would be Introductory Local Law #17 of the year 1979. Mr. Kennedy said this had been changed to include quasi public property into the alcohol beverage law. Mr. J. Lubeck, Merrick Road, said a person should be allowed to have a beer for lunch behind his own property. Mr. Hubert said anyone eating lunch in a car behind a deli could be arrested for drinking beer. Mayor Niemi said this was true. Mr. R. Gnecco, So. Ketcham Avenue, said it was almost impossible for the police to control parking and he couldn't understand how they could control drinking. Mr. Pearsall asked if it would be possible for the bars to supply paper cups to do away with the bottles being thrown on the street. Mayor Niemi said it was not the bars who were at fault but the people buying six packs and drinking it after the bar had closed. Trustee Robinson asked if a person living over a store could have a party in the back yard without being arrested under this open bottle law. Mr. Kennedy said this would be classified as residential.

Trustee Braun moved that this be introduced as Introductory Local Law #2 of the year 1980. This was seconded by Trustee First.

Vote on the Motion: 5 ayes; 0 nays; Motion Carried

Mr. Kennedy then took up Introductory Local Law #21 of the year 1979 saying that this called for a change in certificate of occupancy - allowing only thirty days after an alteration. Trustee Pavlik, Jr. moved that this be introduced as Introductory Local Law #3 of the year 1980. This was seconded by Trustee Robinson.

Vote on the Motion: 5 ayes; 0 nays - Motion Carried

Mr. Kennedy then brought up Introductory Local Law #22 of the year 1979 saying that the change gives the Building Inspector the right to close a premise for hazardous or unsafe conditions. Trustee Pavlik, Jr. moved that this be introduced as Introductory Local Law #4 of the year 1980. This was seconded by Trustee Robinson.

Vote on the Motion: 5 ayes; 0 nays - Motion Carried

Mr. Kennedy then brought up Introductory Local Law #33 of the year 1979. He said this explained the wording on garbage accumulation allowing only two days to correct a hazardous or dangerous situation. He said the present time limit was fifteen days. Bruce Kennedy said it also increased the truck fee to $125. Trustee Braun moved that this be introduced as Introductory Local Law #5 of the year 1980. This was seconded by Trustee First.

Vote on the Motion: 5 ayes; 0 nays - Motion Carried

Mr. Kennedy then brought up Introductory Local Law #34 of the year 1979. He said the changes were in the licensing of public garages from $25.00 to $50.00. Mr. Korenman asked why fees should be increased. Trustee First said it was the increased cost of handling and an increased cost of government. Mayor Niemi said $50.00 was a reasonable fee. Mr. Korenman said this was harassment. Bruce Kennedy said Section 12, the fee for the sale of food from vehicles, had been changed from $25.00 to $125.00 for the permit. Mr. R. Rais of Amity Chevy said this would tend to drive some of the catering trucks out of the Village as they did not have that many stops in the Village. Brad Berger asked how long other towns had charged $125 and why were we changing the fee at this time. Mayor Niemi said the fee was being changed now because we were in the process of recodification. Tom Burk said increasing these fees would hurt the small businesses. Doug Lang said he did not think it was necessary to match the fees of the Town of Babylon as they covered such a tremendous area. Mr. S. Kretz informed the audience that these traveling trucks were paying no real estate tax but were competing with neighborhood businessmen.

## The Village Government and how it Works

The Amityville government functions to maintain the unity and protect the rights and properties of it's inhabitants.

Following is a list of the different officers of the community:

The Incorporated Village Government

| | |
|---|---|
| Elective Officers | Mayor, Trustees, Police Justice |
| Appointive Boards | Assessors, Zoning Appeals, Park Commission Planning |
| Appointive Officers | Acting Police Justice, Building Inspector, Fire Safety Inspector, Clerk, Counsel |

Other Positions are:

Treasurer
Superintendent of Public Works
Health Official
Village Engineer
Police Justice

# XIII THE AMITYVILLE TROLLEY

## The Story of The Huntington Railroad

Elizabeth Maurice

Transportation into and out of Huntington was exclusively by water for almost two hundred years. In 1826, however, a stage ran between Huntington and Brooklyn. By 1868, the Long Island Rail Road had tracks to Huntington. This set the stage for branching out on Long Island. In 1886, Herman F. Rogers and E. D. Davidson were planning a horse drawn car line to operate along Huntington's New York Avenue from the harbor through the village to the railroad station.

By 1898 technicological advances had brought about the electrification of two existing horse car lines, the Far Rockaway Village and the Huntington lines. As trolley fever swept Long Island, it became feasible to link the towns north and south, as well as east and west.

Amityville, which was once known as West Neck, seems to have had it's origin in a grist and saw mill that dates back to about 1780. According to one report:

> Amityville must be classed as a modern town. It's oyster business is large and prosperous; it's hotels are modern and well appointed, and it's health sanitariums were famous all over the country. It has all modern improvements in the way of splendid roads, electric lights and boating and fishing appliances for pleasure seekers and attracts a yearly increasing colony of summer residents of the highest social class. (1)

Amityville was one of the small towns populating the South Shore that relied on water transportation to reach other towns and the city. East-West travel was always greater because of economic considerations. By 1898, however, Amityville was part of the movement to link itself with the rest of the Island by trolley. After a few false starts, Amityville, in July of 1903, began to initiate plans for electrification. That summer the Amityville and Huntington Traction Company had plans to buy out the existing Huntington Railroad and extend it south through Farmingdale to Amityville: "The company spent the summer of 1903 in securing franchises from the three townships of Huntington, Oyster Bay, and Babylon, and the supervisors of Nassau County. In August the company approached the trustees of Amityville for a franchise to lay its road on Broadway and Richmond Avenue to the water front." (2)

On March 2, 1904, the franchise was awarded to the Amityville and Huntington Traction Company. The route of the trolley was to be from Ireland's Bridge on Merrick Road just east of Ocean Avenue, west to Broadway, then north on Broadway. The Amityville and Huntington Traction Company signed the agreement. They were confident of selling the unprofitable Huntington Railroad and getting the approval of the State Board of Railroad Commissioners for their project. At the meeting which took place on May 6, 1904, in New York, the board examined the project. They considered the backing sound, for important stockholders of the eighth Ward Bank were involved, but vetoed the plan because the company wanted to have grade crossings over the Long Island Railroad tracks at Amityville and Farmingdale. The company applied to Amityville for an extension of time, but didn't take advantage of it.

The LIRR intended to build the line from Huntington Station through Melville to Amityville. The LIRR also planned to enlarge the line by extending it along Merrick Road from Amityville to Babylon. The people thought the idea excellent and saw the benefit to all. In April 1906, Chief Engineer Savage of the LIRR, Huntington Commissioner Heckscher and Town Supervison Ireland, took a trip over the proposed route. At the same time, the LIRR bought, for five thousand dollars, a two acre tract that is now the site of the present Huntington Station. There was some opposition to this plan because the railroad wanted to build a new underpass to separate the steam railroad from the trolley. This involved the building of a retaining wall that would interfere with the commercial traffic in the town.

Beginning in the summer of 1906, the LIRR had to secure franchises from the eight regulatory bodies involved, which in turn had to negotiate separate contracts by law. They were:

1. Town of Huntington Highway Commissioners for use of New York Avenue (10/6/06)
2. Village of Huntington for New York Avenue inside village (9/2 - 10/6/06)
3. Supervisors of Suffolk County
4. Supervisors of Nassau County for Farmingdale (11/13/06)
5. Town of Oyster Bay Highway Commissioners for use of Conklin Street inside village (3/12/07)
6. Village of Farmingdale for use of Conklin Street and Main Street inside village (11/5/06)
7. Town of Babylon Highway Commissioners for use of Route 110 (6/10/07)
8. Village of Amityville for use of Broadway and Richmond Avenue (6/10/07)

Actual construction was to begin by April 1, 1907, and at least ten thousand dollars had to be expended in labor, materials, rails, ties, etc. The trolley was to be in operation before October 1, 1908. The company had to agree to run the road as a continuous line by operating one or more cars a day. "If the line was abandoned, the property would revert to the town. The company could charge no more than fifteen cents for a ride from Huntington Station to Farmingdale, with five and ten cent fares in the intermediate zones." (3)

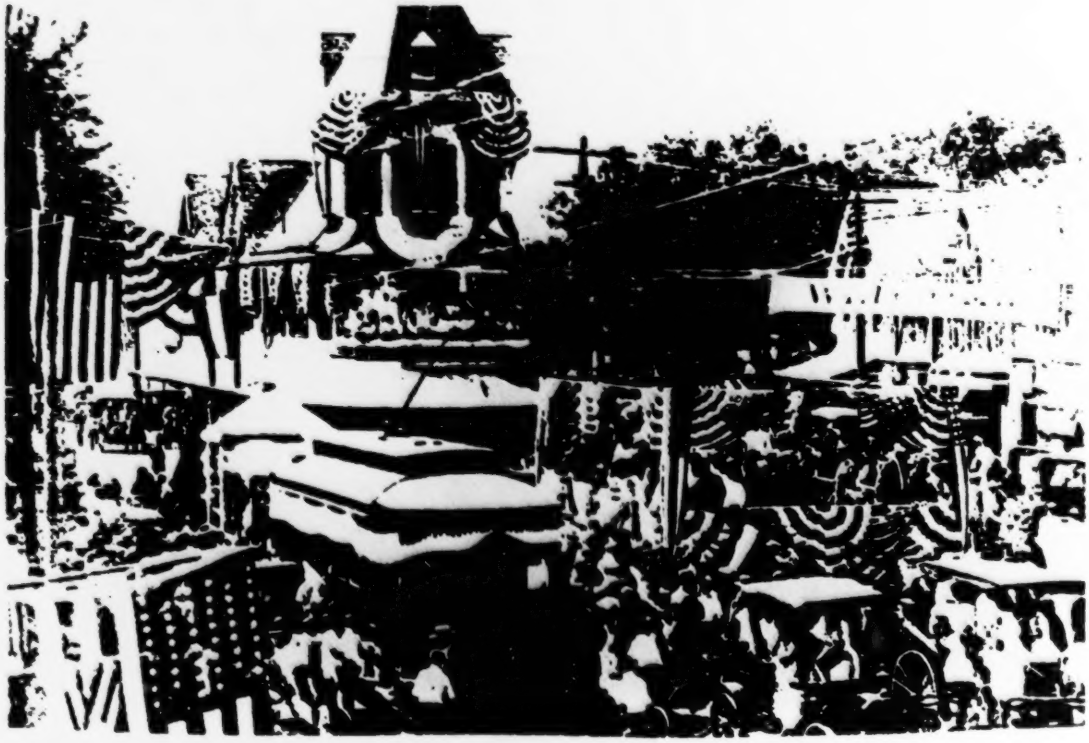
On October 9, 1906, the LIRR bought the Babylon Railroad which ran between the Babylon Railroad station and Fire Island Park. The railroad assigned it to its trolley subsidiary. The purpose behind the sale was to assure that there would be no trouble in extending the cross-island line to Babylon. There was hope that all would be ready for construction to start by February. The railroad's final act of 1906 was to apply to the Amityville board for a franchise to build and operate a street surface railroad:

> "From the North line of the village of Amityville, South down Broadway to Sterling Place; thence West along Sterling Place about 1050 feet, thence via an incline over private property to Green Avenue at Ketchem Avenue, thence East along Green Avenue to Broadway, thence Easterly along Union Avenue to Bayview to Oak Street, and East to the village line. Also from Union Avenue and Broadway South down Broadway to the Merrick Road, thence crossing Broadway into Bennett Place, and along Bennett Place to Grace Place, East along Grace Place to Ocean Avenue and South down Ocean Avenue to the bay." (4)

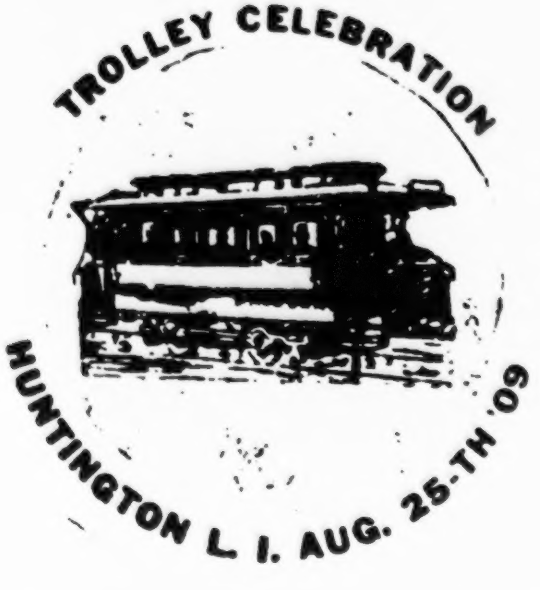
The trolley line never ran that route because of the two words "in perpetuity". In January 1907, the LIRR filed its acceptance with a check of one thousand dollars and an indemnity bond for two thousand dollars for the Nassau County franchise to operate on Conklin and Main Streets in Farmingdale. The terms of the contract stated that the road was to be in operation within three years, and that at the end of fifty years Nassau County could charge rent for use of the road, not to exceed five dollars per year per one hundred feet of tract. Every twenty-five year period the rental could only be increased at a rate not exceeding two per cent of the total cost of construction. So, in actuality, there were limitations in the contract. Amityville was unique in one requirement; the cars had to use fenders and wheel guards when running through the village. The village board granted a franchise to the Babylon Railroad. A change of route inside Amityville was contained in the franchise. Instead of traveling to the bay by way of Ocean Avenue, the track in Bennett Place was to turn west onto private property to Richmond Avenue, and then run south down Richmond, meeting Ocean at Unqua Place, and then to the bay. There was to be a spur to Ketchem Avenue, then North to the Amityville Station.

In 1907, Route 110 South of Jericho Turnpike was extremely crooked. It added a great deal of time to any travel. The trolley authorities and town authorities, with the aid of the State Highway Commission in Albany, decided to build a new road from Huntington Station to the Babylon town line. In May of that year, after a visit from the Highway Commissioners, most of the farmers along the route donated strips of land for a highway.

The line was being constructed at a breakneck pace to coincide with the August twenty-fifth date of the Trolley Day celebration being planned by the Amityville Record. The celebration consisted of parades, cars, floats and a Fire Department parade. Speeches by noted politicians such as Assemblyman Alfred E. Smith, and the Honorable John J. Delaney of Manhattan were delivered at the banquet. Assemblyman Smith would later become governor of New York and Democratic candidate for President in 1928.



The trolley celebration in Amityville in front of the Triangle Building on August 25, 1909.


TROLLEY CELEBRATION
HUNTINGTON L. I. AUG. 25-TH '09

Lapel button distributed on Trolley Day
to celebrate the opening of the cross-island line.

The trolley was an enormously important success. Eight-thousand people were in attendance at Trolley Carnival Day. Free rides were given all day on ten trolleys. Two major papers of the day, The Brooklyn Eagle and the Brooklyn Times, devoted entire pages to the event. It would link economically and socially the north and south shore residents. From every part of the Island, everyone was joined. Every village was now connected to the county seat at Riverhead and all three branches of the railroad. Hopefully, the creation of a twice a day ferry from Norwalk to Huntington for seven or eight months of the year would be established. People from as far away as Connecticut would want to visit such south shore attractions as Fire Island, Point O'Woods and Oak Island beaches, and return to their own homes the same day.

The coming of the trolley led to the modernization of Long Island. An example is the macadamizing of route 110 and the straightening of New York Avenue. Although the trolley is no longer in existence, these roads stand as a living reminder of the great influence that the trolley had upon the history of Long Island. When the line was completed, it ran for 18.53 miles. The track was single track at the side of the road except in Farmingdale and Amityville. In these towns they had the rail in the center of the street. Amityville had the best of everything. The rails were the 73 pound girder type with either White Oak or Yellow Pine creosoted ties spaced two feet apart. Tubular iron poles carried span construction. I-beam brackets carried the high tension wires. The messenger wire was carried twenty feet above the rail, while the trolley wire was carried nineteen feet above the rail. A complete description follows:

> In Amityville, the tracks went south down Broadway (coming from the Central Extension Branch at South Farmingdale) to the Amityville line. Here the girder rail began and ran down the center of the street. Then for a block and a half, the track ran west on Sterling Place. It then turned south and crossed the viaduct emerging at the

crossroads of Greene and Ketchem Avenues. Then the rails would roll eastward onto Broadway, moving southward to the temporary terminus. This whole trip would take an hour and sixteen minutes. The local cars were dispatched by the railroad in Amityville between the Merrick Road and the north village line. (5)

The cross-island line was divided into six fare zones of five cents each:

3.0 mi. - Halesite to Huntington Station
2.9 mi. - Huntington Station to DeForest Farm (Schwab Road)
3.0 mi. - DeForest Farm to Duryea Farm (Lower Melville at Duryea Road)
3.0 mi. - Duryea Farm to Farmingdale Railroad Station
3.6 mi. - Farmingdale Station to Amityville Village line
3.1 mi. - Amityville village line to Amityville dock (6)

For the life of the system the three zone fare system did not change.

Between August 26, 1907 to September 6, 1907, seventy-two thouand fares were collected. Many people felt that the Island was worth more than the thirty cents just to look at: "People from Amityville and vicinity, who had never ventured more than a few miles beyond the village in their narrow, limited lives, were lured from their homes for the first time by the trolley and was astounded at how big it was. A Brooklyn Times reporter, out with four men from Amityville, pointed out to them different points of interest along the way. When an old homestead in which Walt Whitman was born was reached, the reporter enthusiastically exclaimed: 'Here's the famous old Walt Whitman homestead!' The visitors looked at the little house in surprise, and then said, 'Who was he?'" (7)

As summer faded, the cross-island line fell victim to the winter weather. Snow storms often barricaded the tracks. The poor service due to the weather caused many passengers to complain about "standing for hours in a January cold on a desolate wind-swept field." (8)

The only conditions crippling the Huntington Railroad in pre-World War I days were power difficulties and weather. Besides snowstorms, floodings were a common occurrence. The three hundred and one hundred and twenty-five kilowatt converters would break down many times. One such embarrassing failure was at the Fireman's Tournament in Amityville. Crowds of people and no way to transport them even with ten extra cars on the line.

What caused the failure of the cross-island line? What made the LIRR drop it's investment of almost a million dollars after ten years?

First, the line dropped the freight service in November 1915. The Public Service Commission defended the move by saying that "to continue to carry freight at a loss under such conditions as appears in the present case" would not be in the company's interest and ultimately the public's interest.

Second, not only were service and maintenance on the whole line going down, due to erratic and irregular schedules, but the roads were becoming poorly maintained. At one time it had been safer to ride the trolley than car because the roads were so treacherous.

Third, on September 15, 1916, the Huntington Railroad refused to carry the Federal mails from the railroad station to the Post Office. The Long Island gave a week's notice of termination because two hundred and fifty dollars was not sufficient compensation. This money was paid on a yearly basis.

Fourth, in May 1915, the war with the jitneys started. A jitney was an open crowed, hard riding, poorly sprung, enlarged taxicab with two to three rows of seats. A lot of people liked them because they would move fast and meet the trains.

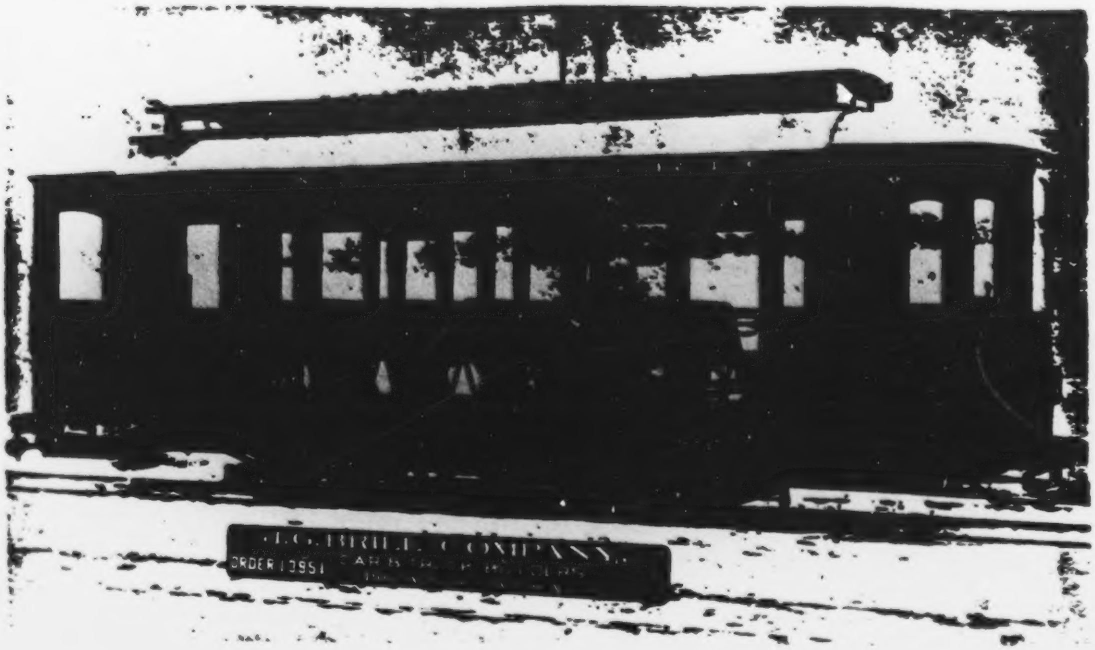
Fifth, World War I affected the national economy, beginning in 1916. Railroad operation costs increased anywhere from 20% to 400%. The Long Island Railroad, Huntington Railroad's parent company, cut it's passenger service when faced with a fuel shortage. A hard winter, overworked engines and declining maintenance added to the problem:

> "In January, 1919, an edition of the Bulletin, warned in an editorial that the Huntington Railroad was very shaky financially and that homeowners, businessmen and especially real estate operators had better rally to save the road. He pointed out one fact that is often lost sight of: the Long Island Railroad was no longer running it's own railroad. It had been taken over for the war effort along with many other roads and was now run by and for the Federal Government. Consideration of local sentiment on a sense of responsibility to Long Island interests no longer had any place in the thinking of the railroad's management. Since the Huntington Railroad was a continuing financial drain on the LIRR, the Federal management would have no hesitation abandoning it." (10)

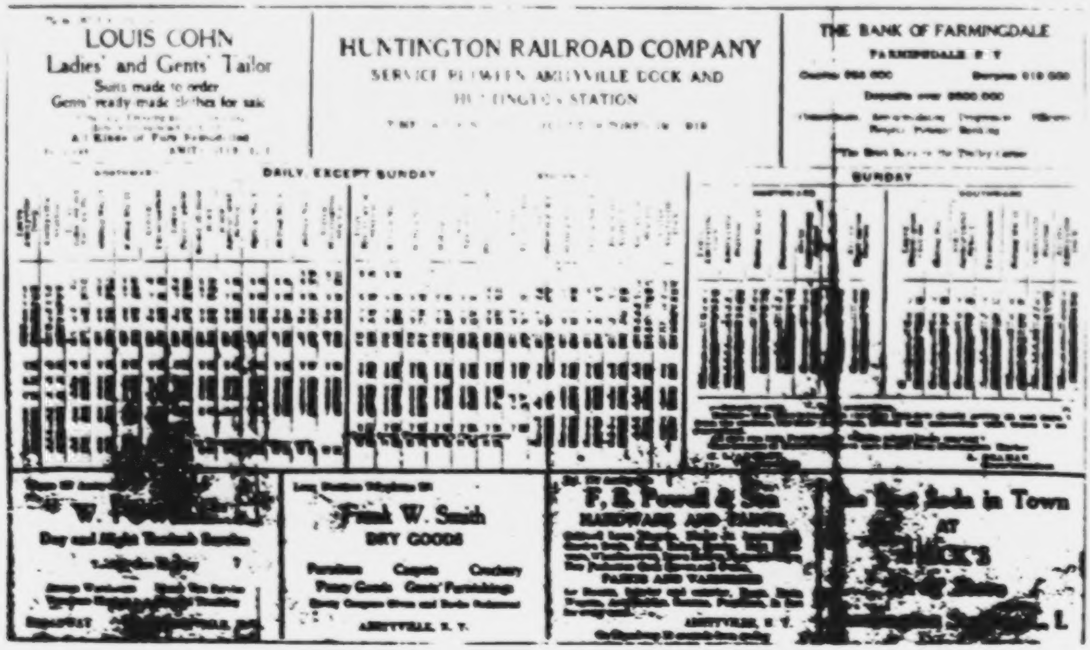
On January 22, 1919, the road to dissolution was taken. On August 15, 1927, after years of service, the trolleys made their last trip without any fanfare from the public, officials, or press. The only thing that remained to remind a passerby of the existence of the trolley in Amityville was, until recently, the fifty-nine year old stretch of track in Sterling Place. It was taken up on March 17, 1975, due to the laying of the sewer pipes by the Southwest Suffolk Sewer Corporation. Ironically, the rails and ties were found to be in excellent condition.

## ENDNOTES

1. Peter Ross, History of Long Island, Chicago, (Lowes Publishing Co., 1902)
2. Cross Island Line, The Story of the Huntington Railroad, Vincent F. Seyfried p.29
3. Ibid. p.33
4. Ibid. p.35
5. Ibid. p.55
6. Ibid. p.57
7. Ibid. p.59
8. Ibid. p.63
9. Ibid. p.95
10. Ibid. pp. 110-111



The lone single-truck convertible



LOUIS COHN
Ladies' and Gents' Tailor
Suits made to order
Gents' ready made clothes for sale

HUNTINGTON RAILROAD COMPANY
SERVICE BETWEEN AMITYVILLE DOCK AND
HUNTINGTON STATION

THE BANK OF FARMINGDALE
FARMINGDALE, N. Y.

DAILY EXCEPT SUNDAY

SUNDAY

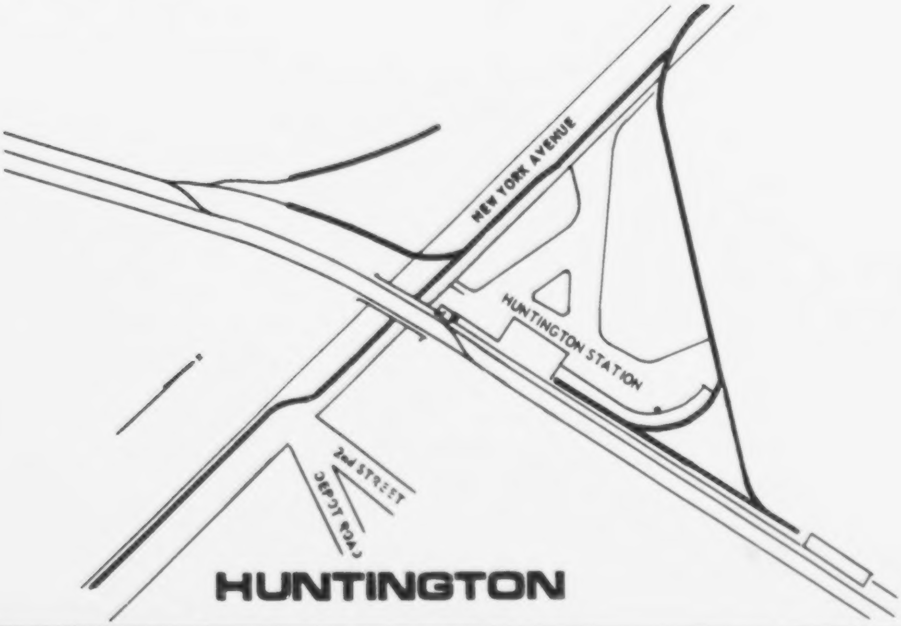
Day and Night Taxicab Service

Frank W. Smith
DRY GOODS
Furniture Carpets Crockery
Fancy Goods Gents' Furnishings
AMITYVILLE, N. Y.

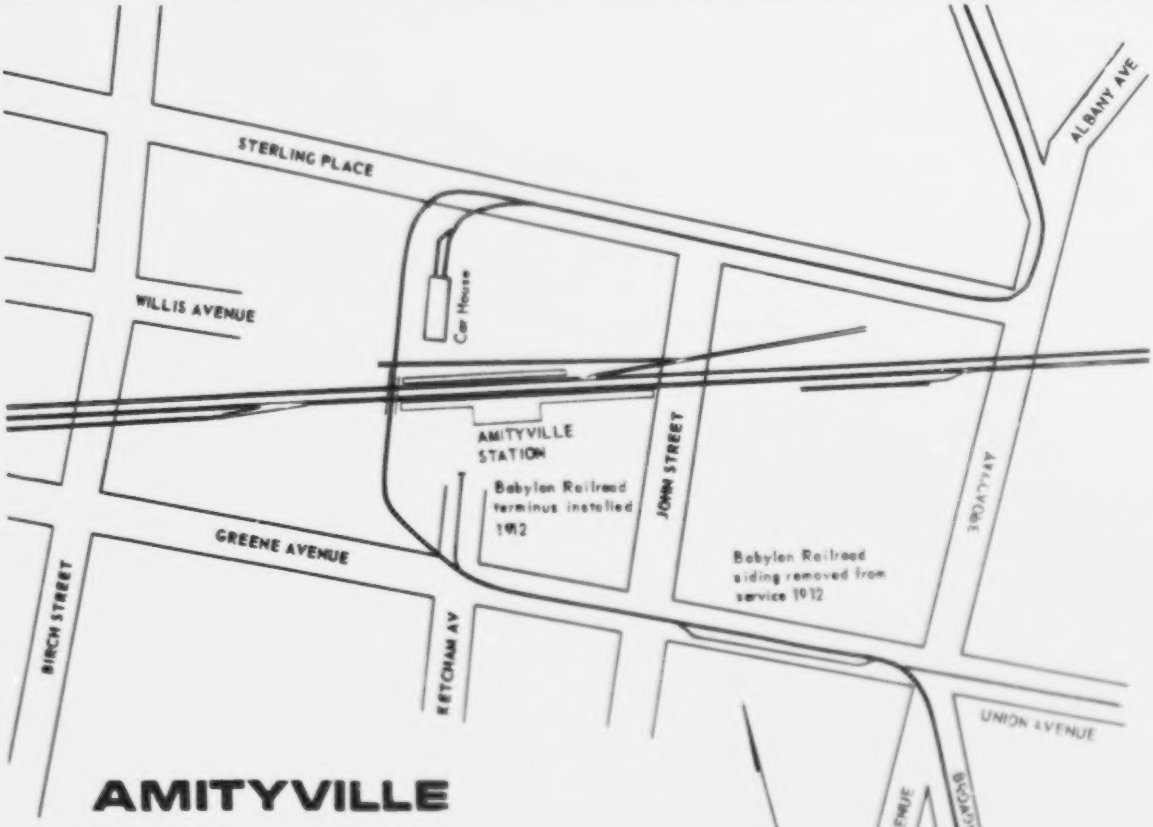
F. B. Powell & Son
HARDWARE AND PAINTS
PAINTS AND VARNISHES
AMITYVILLE, N. Y.

The Best Soda in Town
AT

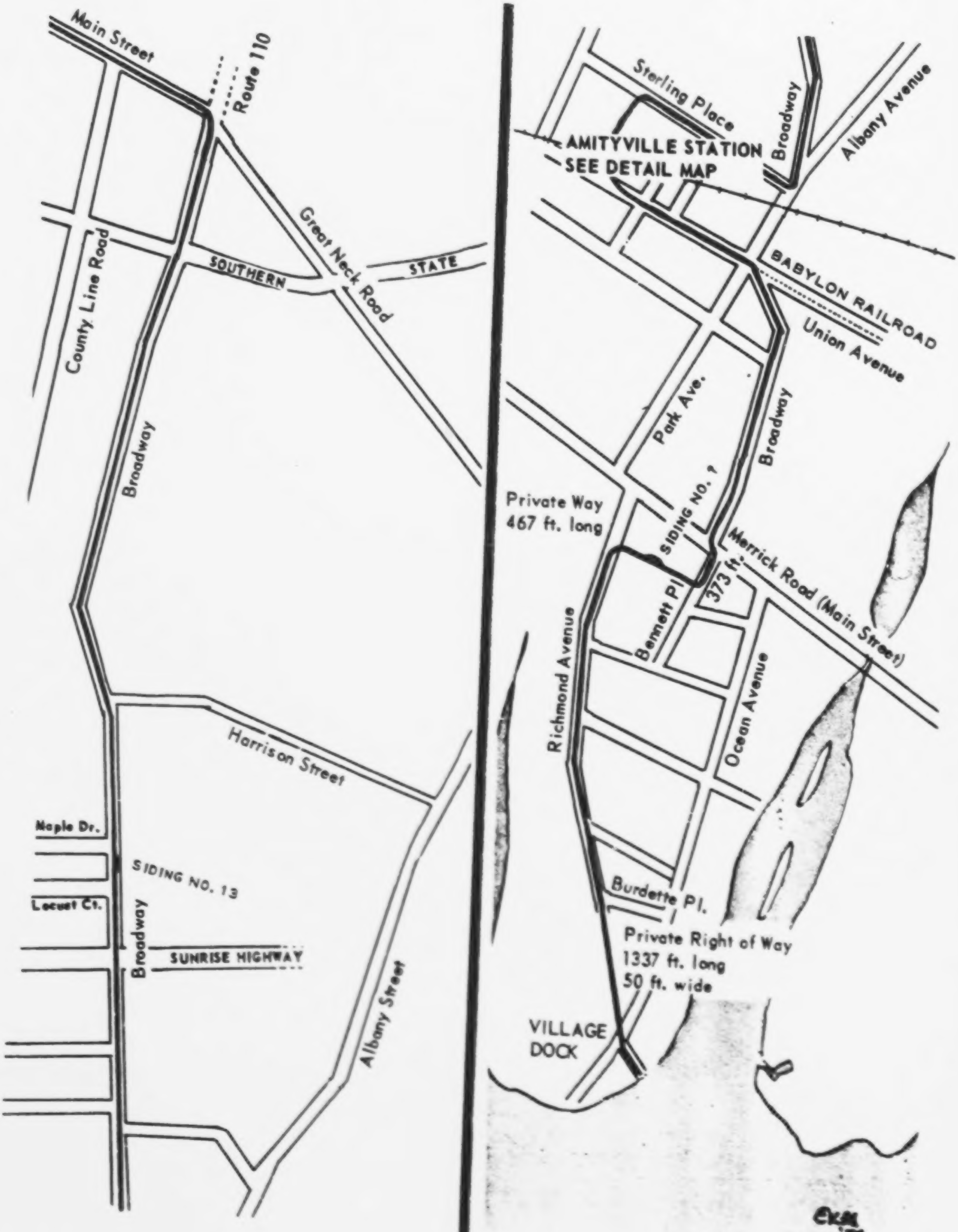
A rare trolley schedule card from Amityville for October, 1918


NEW YORK AVENUE
HUNTINGTON STATION
2nd STREET
DEPOT ROAD

**HUNTINGTON**


STERLING PLACE
ALBANY AVE
WILLIS AVENUE
Car House
AMITYVILLE STATION
Babylon Railroad terminus installed 1912
JOHN STREET
BROADWAY
Babylon Railroad siding removed from service 1912
GREENE AVENUE
BIRCH STREET
KETCHAM AV
UNION AVENUE
PARK AVENUE
BROADWAY

**AMITYVILLE**


Main Street
Route 110
County Line Road
SOUTHERN
STATE
Great Neck Road
Broadway
Harrison Street
Maple Dr.
SIDING NO. 13
Locust Ct.
Broadway
SUNRISE HIGHWAY
Albany Street
Sterling Place
Broadway
Albany Avenue
AMITYVILLE STATION
SEE DETAIL MAP
BABYLON RAILROAD
Union Avenue
Park Ave.
Broadway
SIDING NO. 7
Private Way
467 ft. long
Merrick Road (Main Street)
Bennett Pl.
373 ft.
Richmond Avenue
Ocean Avenue
Burdette Pl.
Private Right of Way
1337 ft. long
50 ft. wide
VILLAGE
DOCK
EKM '76

## XIV THE DOMINICAN SISTERS OF AMITYVILLE

Millie Stewart

The historical organization in Amityville that I have chosen to research is the Dominican Sisters who came to Amityville in 1876.

Sisters of the Monastery of the Holy Cross in Regensberg, Germany, were invited to send Sisters to Williamsburg, Brooklyn to teach the children of German immigrants. Four Sisters arrived in Williamsburg on September 2, 1853. They took charge of a small school where they taught all the basic subjects.

In 1863, they began taking care of the "neglected children of the Parish" and donated their small convent for use as an orphanage. There were many orphans at that time because of the Civil War.

In 1868, the Dominican Sisters were asked to provide nurses to work in the newly established St. Catherine's Hospital in Brooklyn.

In 1854, Adam Schlegel, a wealthy parishioner, of Most Holy Trinity Parish in Brooklyn, offered to the Sisters 83 acres of land in North Amityville with a 99-year lease. In return for which they would care for orphans and elderly people. Thus was started the First Dominican Convent in Suffolk County.

In December 1875, the Sisters purchased eleven acres of land for $1800 with plans to erect the Queen of the Rosary Novitiate. On April 20, 1876, the building of the Queen of the Rosary Novitiate was begun. The cornerstone was laid on June 13 of the same year. The dedication ceremony took place on November 30, 1876.

Mr. Schlegel's summer cottage became the first Novitiate, now named Seraphina Cottage after Mother Seraphina, who was Prioress during that period.

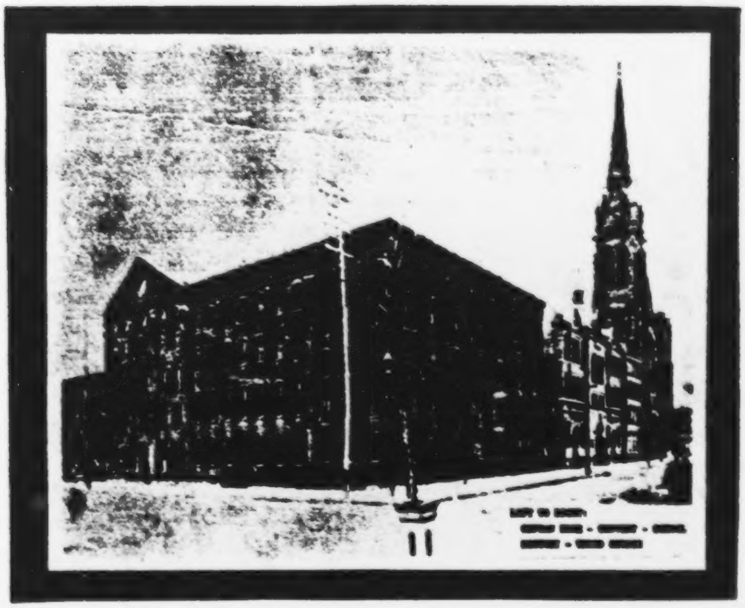
The building of the east wing, chapel, and the rectory began on March 18, 1878. The cornerstone was laid on May 8 of the same year. Bishop Loughlin dedicated and blessed the building and the tower bell on March 3, 1879. The building had housing facilities for 100 small orphan boys and 60 orphan girls, and also had classroom facilities.

In 1880, an elementary school was initiated for orphans, and a one-room Accommodation School for the neighborhood children. The lessons taught were fundamentals.

There was also a Novitiate School instituted for young girls who wanted to become Sisters. This institution was the seed of the Queen of the Rosary Academy.

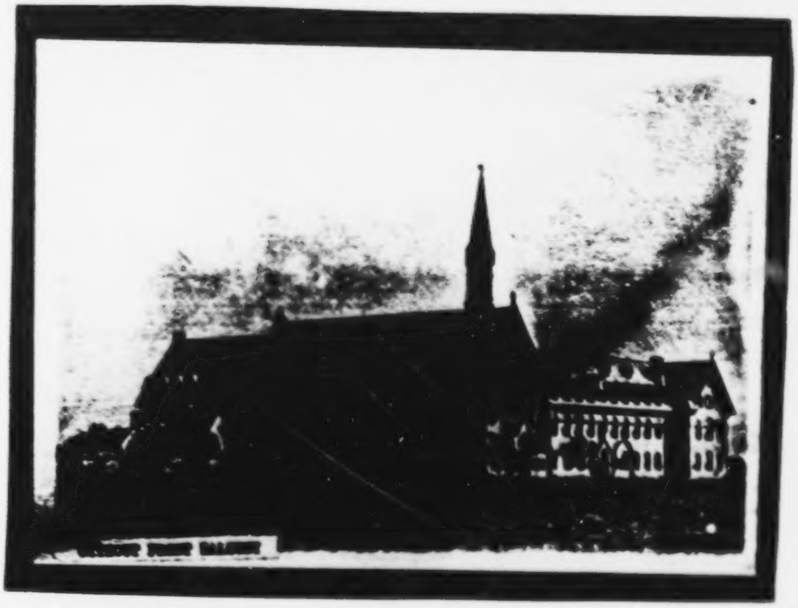
On January 18, 1907, the Academy received a Regents Charter from New York State. The first Regents examinations were held on January 21, 1907.

The Academy also had facilities for boarders. "All the intellectual and physical aspects of education were fully stressed, but it was the spiritual development upon which a special emphasis was placed". In 1915, Reverend Chaplain announced that the Academy was to be closed to externs, and open only to the novices. However, in 1930, the school was reopened to children of the surrounding villages, and a two-year commercial course was organized for day students.



Convent of Dominican Sisters, Williamsburg, Brooklyn

In 1949, a retreat house dedicated to Our Lady of Prouille was constructed. Connected to this was an auditorium for the girls of the Academy. In 1954, due to increased enrollment, an extension was added to the Academy. Eventually a science lab and a gym were built for the enrichment of the students' education. In 1986, the school was closed because of the steady decrease in enrollment.



Queen of the Rosary Convent in Amityville, 1879

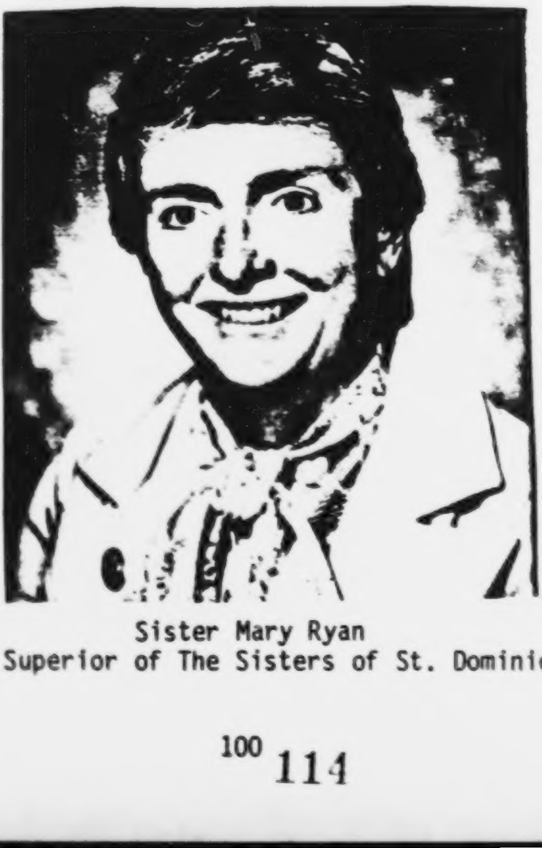
The Sisters' Cemetery, located directly behind the Motherhouse, was blessed on January 16, 1878. The first burial took place on March 20, 1878. Sister Sophia Heimbuecher, an early resident of North Amityville, described a Sister's funeral procession in the early days:

> When a Sister died in the beginning, the church bell used to ring two or three times. The neighbors would hear the chapel bell and that would mean for the neighbors to get together. Otherwise, there wouldn't be anybody going to the funeral. If it was a Sister from Kentucky that died, she wouldn't have anybody, see? And then they would have a flat-top wagon, four wheels, like a table. The coffin would be on there - just plain, no flowers or anything, and four postulants and a novice on each side to walk on each side, and four horses they had, sometimes only two (when it was a skinny one, I guess). (This is from a transcribed Oral History interview held on March 31, 1980).

In 1961, an extension was built on the Motherhouse. Here, the many new Sisters were trained as novices in the spiritual life and also were educated to become qualified teachers for the increasing number of schools in the charge of the community. This learning institution, named St. Albert's College, was associated with Molloy Catholic College in Rockville Centre. The cornerstone was laid in 1962. Eventually St. Albert's College was closed due to a decrease in the number of aspirants to religious life.

This large, new building then went through a process of renovation and it became a residence for the many elderly and the sick Sisters of the community. In 1969, an infirmary called Carlin Hall was set up.

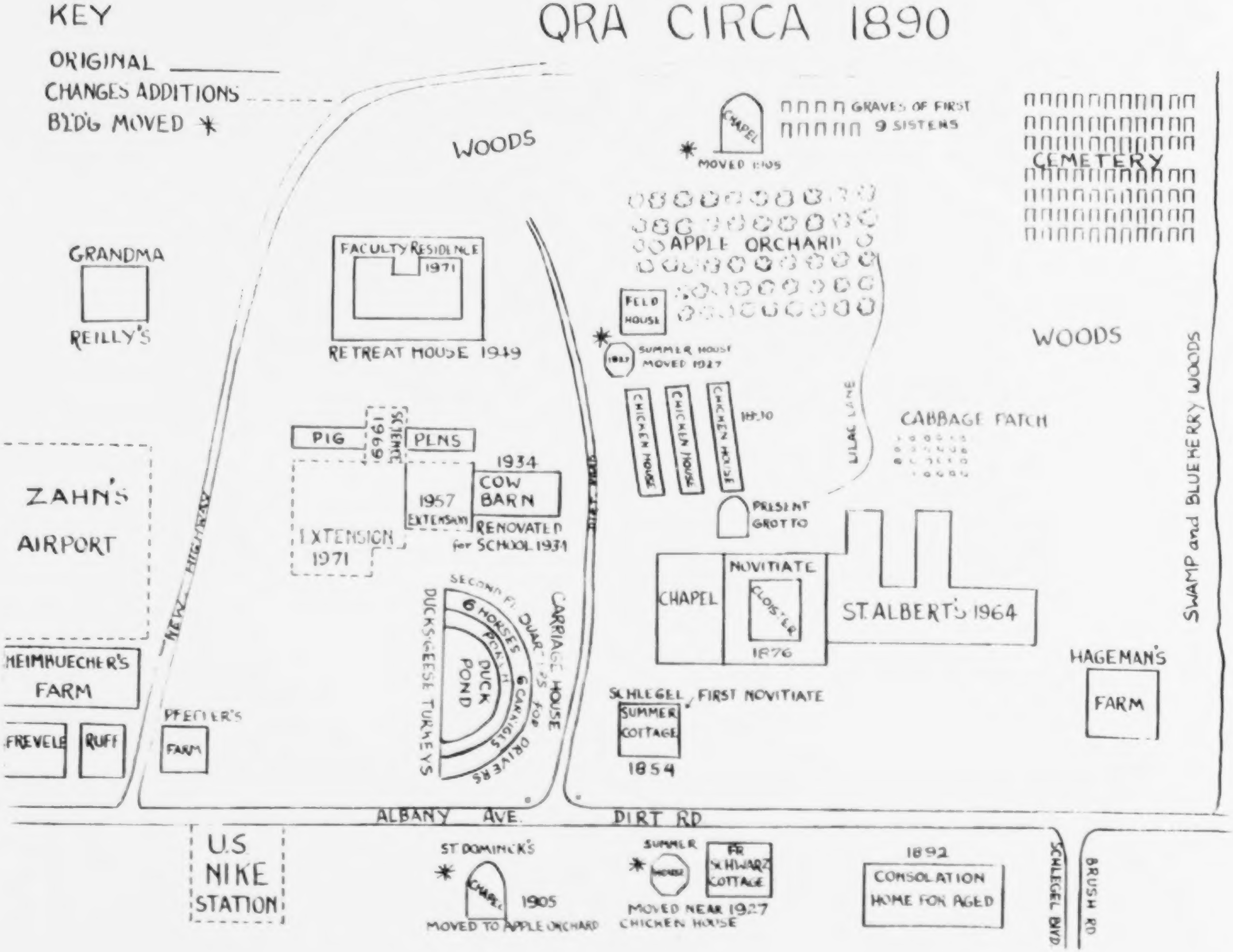
The Dominican Sisters have served the Amityville community and its surrounding villages by education and cultural activities such as plays and recitals. They have contributed to the economy by the purchase of food, goods, and supplies. The Dominican Sisters, as Christian women, have tried to serve Amityville in their lives of prayer and concern.



Sister Mary Ryan
The present Mother Superior of The Sisters of St. Dominic in Amityville

Queen of the Rosary Convent, Albany Avenue, Amityville

101


QRA CIRCA 1890
KEY
ORIGINAL
CHANGES ADDITIONS
BLDG MOVED *
WOODS
CHAPEL
* MOVED 1905
GRAVES OF FIRST 9 SISTERS
CEMETERY
APPLE ORCHARD
FIELD HOUSE
* SUMMER HOUSE MOVED 1927
CHICKEN HOUSE
CHICKEN HOUSE
CHICKEN HOUSE
1930
LILAC LANE
CABBAGE PATCH
WOODS
SWAMP and BLUEBERRY WOODS
PRESENT GROTTO
CHAPEL
NOVITIATE
CLOISTER
1876
ST. ALBERT'S 1964
HAGEMAN'S FARM
SCHLEGEL FIRST NOVITIATE
SUMMER COTTAGE
1854
GRANDMA
REILLY'S
FACULTY RESIDENCE
1971
RETREAT HOUSE 1949
PIG
1969 SCIENCE
PENS
1934
COW BARN
RENOVATED for SCHOOL 1931
1957 EXTENSION
EXTENSION 1971
DIRT ROAD
NEW HIGHWAY
ZAHN'S AIRPORT
HEIMHUECHER'S FARM
FREVELE
RUFF
PFEFFER'S FARM
SECOND FL. QUARTERS for DRIVERS
6 HORSES
POULTRY
6 CARRIAGES
CARRIAGE HOUSE
DUCK POND
DUCKS GEESE TURKEYS
ALBANY AVE.
DIRT RD
U.S. NIKE STATION
ST DOMINICK'S
* CHAPEL 1905
MOVED TO APPLE ORCHARD
* SUMMER HOUSE
MOVED NEAR 1927 CHICKEN HOUSE
FR SCHWARZ COTTAGE
1892
CONSOLATION HOME FOR AGED
SCHLEGEL BLVD.
BRUSH RD